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DORA DIBNEY

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DORA DIBNEY

OURSELVES AS WE ARE. 1929

frontispiece.

A MOUNTY'S WIFE

BEING THE LIFE STORY OF ONE ATTACHED
TO THE FORCE BUT NOT OF IT

BY

LUTA MUNDAY

"He also serves who only stands and waits."

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TO

MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS

MR. AND MRS. W. A. MACLEOD

I WISH TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE FOR THEIR

UNFAILING KINDNESS AND ENCOURAGEMENT

FOREWORD

THERE have been many histories, many romances, and many tales written and woven about the members of that famous body of men "The Royal North-West Mounted Police," but no mention has been made of the helpmates of these men, and this is my excuse for telling of my life for over twenty years as the wife of one of these members.

This book I dedicate to those women of the force who have endured, who have watched and waited with an aching heart, as I have done, and so will understand.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Toronto—My Wedding Day	13
II.	I Join My Husband in the West	25
III.	My First Experience of Detachment Life	44
IV.	Cumberland House—My First Northern Summer	56
V.	We Move to The Pas	64
VI.	Hard Trips and Holidays	76
VII.	Coutts—Rough Times on the Border	98
VIII.	Regina—The "Flue" Epidemic	113
IX.	Niagara Falls—The Royal "Canadian" Mounted Police	122
X.	Chesterfield Inlet—The Far North	131
XI.	Our First Winter on Hudson Bay	139
XII.	Walter's Long Patrol	154
XIII.	Birds and Natives	165
XIV.	Taboos of the Esquimos	179
XV.	The Dogs—My Greatest Friends	187
XVI.	The Long Trip South	197
XVII.	Depot—Headquarters Old and New	206
XVIII.	Winnipeg—Friends Old and New	212

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Ourselves As We Are	*Frontispiece*
	FACING PAGE
Baby Polar Bear and "Cinders"	30
The Same Bear at Banff	30
Leaving Camp in the Bush Country	44
Walter and Major	76
Myself in Indian Clothes	94
Noon Meal with Our Indian Guides	94
The Hudson Straits—Caught in the Ice	134
The Hudson Straits—an Ice Field	134
Ourselves in Esquimo Clothes	140
Myself and Esquimo Woman	148
Chesterfield Esquimos	148
Esquimos' Summer Camp	156
Myself at Entrance of an Igloo	168
A White Whale and the Old Veteran	174
Oog-Jug (Ground Seal) at the Edge of a Floe	174
Esquimos at Chesterfield	178
Natives, wearing Goggles, with a Sailing Sledge	184
Walter looking for a Ship	192
Och-Shute with the "Bully"	196
Esquimo in Kyacks	208

A MOUNTY'S WIFE

CHAPTER I

TORONTO—MY WEDDING DAY

We clasped our hands, the blithe young years and I;
We saw the luring world before us lie;
We laughed aloud, nor dreamed of tear and sigh;
We blessed our fate; the tide of hope ran high
When we clasped hands, the blithe young years and I.

S. M. Best.

Toronto and December seventh, nineteen hundred and five, my wedding day, and supposed to be the greatest day in any girl's life. My young husband to be and I were just boy and girl in our ideas of the event. The day itself was wonderful, right from seven in the morning when we went to meet the groomsman. We did not return until noon, and the wedding being set for two o'clock, we found my mother, bridesmaids, and house guests nearly frantic, quite believing we had eloped. However, we went through with the ceremony bravely in quite a fine church wedding, which they were determined I should have, although my poor husband to be was only a constable in the North-West Mounted Police, drawing the magnificent pay of 50 cents per day. This my mother did not know, nor did she know that we had only $200 to start our married life on, and that, since in the circumstances Walter could not afford a new suit of mufti, he was married in his uniform.

I had my hair up for the first time. It remained up for the duration of the honeymoon, which was spent at

Buffalo, New York, in a hostel costing $5 a day, so that, after the expenses of the wedding, less than a week was all we could manage for our holiday. We then returned to my mother's home, where some of my girlhood friends were still waiting, and spent two very jolly, happy weeks. My husband had a couple of months' leave, but at the end of the fortnight he had a wire to report to the depot at Regina, Saskatchewan, to attend a corporal's class of instruction. We were wildly excited, and I might mention in passing that I never before or since have seen Walter excited in all our life together. Through trials and tribulations, ups and downs, he has been steady as a rock, never swerving from his belief that right is might. In three weeks from our wedding day he was off, and I did not see him again for seven months, and so began for me a lifetime of waiting and watching, hoping and wondering, fearing and praying.

For the next half year my life was very much as it had been before, except that I did not return to school. I went on with private lessons at home, and also tried my skill at cooking, bread-making particularly. I am afraid they were tentative attempts, as there was no pressing necessity for me to do that sort of thing. That was to come later, when I was quite alone and altogether dependent upon myself. I never cared much for teas and what girls mostly like, and I have always had a great dislike for shops and shopping, but I had loved to be on a farm among the animals, never having the slightest fear of anything. In fact, my nickname was "The Imp," and many call me nothing else to this day. Dogs were my greatest joy, and still are. My mother would not allow me to have one of my own, so I had all those of the neighbours and all the stray dogs in the country, and can remember yet how as a little child

I would scold a man on the street for abusing his horse and run crying to my mother to have her stop him. All this was leading up to my future life, to the years to come when my desire for an outdoor life was to be so abundantly satisfied.

My father, having been educated at Christ's Hospital with the idea of being a doctor, came on a visit to Canada with friends in his early twenties. He liked Canada so much that he soon returned here to live. He was always fond of riding and hunting and all outdoor sports. He kept an Indian guide, and they would be off together most of the summer, so I expect I come honestly by my love of outdoor life. My father used to tell an amusing story about the toboggan slide in Montreal, which was very different from the present one, of course. He was there one evening when a party just out from England were watching the tobogganing. He heard one of them say: "I would give £1,000 to go down that slide." Father said to him that he could jump on the toboggan and he would be pleased to take him, which the Englishman did, and when he reached the bottom he said, "Not for £5,000 would I go down again!" So it did not appeal to him as to most of us. The slide is now known as the Montreal Park Slide, and consists of six slides side by side, almost a mile in length, with snow and ice partitions between each. There are gates at the top operated by an attendant when the toboggans are ready to start down. Only members of the toboggan club are allowed to use the slides, and there is a waiting list of hundreds.

I barely remember my father, and my mother has to me always been known as "Dad," and so many of my friends call her the same.

I still believe that not my wedding-day, but the day upon

which I first met my future husband was the greatest day of my life. It was June, 1903, and I had been invited to attend a picnic, but had refused twice. The third time of asking he was held out as a bait and spoken of in glowing terms, and his name mentioned. When I heard it I said, "No, thank you, the name is enough for me!" but further pressure was brought to bear, such as, "lack of girls," etc., and so I gave in, and while waiting at the rendezvous I saw him appearing in the distance. Still having no idea of who it might be, I asked, "Who is the lovely boy with Fred?" and was told that it was the Mr. Munday whom I had declined to meet; at the same time Walter was asking who the girl with Jack was, and so it was love at first sight.

Fred and Jack were old friends, the latter especially so. He came from Scotland, and we had been friends from earliest childhood. Our friendship has continued through all the years; we still meet occasionally, though I am afraid from now on it will be very seldom, he having been secured by a big "Daily" in the United States and lost to Canada. It is a great pity our country has to lose such men.

That first day together was spent on the historic River Humber. I was to sit with Fred, but found myself instead with Walter, who, having just landed from England, could not paddle. (We little knew then the thousands of miles he was to travel in later years by canoe.) We had therefore to row, which very much disgusted me, but Fred had most of the work to do, Walter and I were so busy talking. It rained heavily. We took refuge in a boat-house, and finally mother took us all home, where we finished the day, and where Florence, one of my early friends, begged of me not to marry Walter as he, being

an Englishman, would not be a good husband. However, the Fates had already decided what was in store for us. I have described the day so fully because each detail is as clear in my memory as though it had been yesterday, and it is for me still the greatest day of my life. Before the day was over Walter told me I was the girl for him and no other. I merely laughed, saying I liked all boys alike and so would never marry, but four months later we were engaged, unknown, of course, to outsiders.

Walter had come out to join the famous North-West Mounted Police, which he did at the depot at Regina, Saskatchewan, on his twentieth birthday on November 4 in the same year, for what I thought was a year. When I learned it was five years, which was the term of engagement, and that for that length of time he could not get furlough, I was broken-hearted and wept bitter tears for hours. We wrote to one another every day for eighteen months.

When Walter had spent six weeks in training at Regina, a murderer, Ernest Cashel, escaped from the N.W.M.P. guard-room at Calgary, Alberta. It was quite a sensational escape, Cashel having already been sentenced to death, and caused great excitement throughout the force. (In those days the death sentence was carried out in the yard of an N.W.M.P. guard-room.) Walter, with five other constables, was transferred from Regina to Calgary to assist in the search for Cashel, and, as it was the first case in the force I ever heard anything about, also, as it was Walter's first duty outside of his rides, drills, and lectures at depot, it is a very vivid recollection to me.

Cashel had murdered, for his money, an old man who had befriended him, and was arrested, tried, and condemned to be hanged upon a certain date. The day before

the execution was to take place Cashel's brother came to bid him good-bye. No person except the guard is allowed near a condemned man, and the interview should have taken place with the guard between the visitor and prisoner all the time. This order was carried out up to the time the brother was about to leave, when he asked the guard if he might shake hands with his brother for the last time, and the guard, out of pity and sympathy, allowed him to do so. The brother then went to the front of the cell, which faced the office of the guard-room and was barred from the floor to the ceiling, shook hands, remained a few seconds with his hands above him grasping the bars, while Cashel extracted two revolvers from his brother's inside coat pockets and secreted them in his trousers' pockets. The brother then thanked the guard and left. The death watch, a young recruit, who was in the cell with Cashel at the time, unarmed, of course, turned his back upon the brothers' farewell. The result was that when the N.C.O. in charge of the guard opened the cell door to make his final search of Cashel and the cell before ending his tour of duty, he was held up by Cashel, who had a revolver in each hand, and was himself, with the two remaining guards, locked in the cell by Cashel, who told them that one life more or less did not matter to him. Cashel had only ten minutes before the relief guard would be at the guard-room, and he evaded capture for six weeks. He first hid under the girders of a bridge across the Bow River, quite close to the guard-room, until all in barracks had left on the hunt for him. He then made his escape, living a hide-and-seek existence for six weeks before being finally located in a dug-out cellar of a homesteader's hut, from which he was smoked out, only at last to pay the extreme penalty.

Walter, in turn with others, was his death watch during the last few days and nights he spent in his cell, and Cashel told him that during his weeks in hiding he had seen Walter eating dinner one day at a farmhouse. On that occasion Walter was in mufti. Cashel went on to say that had he known then that he was a policeman he would have shot him. How thrilled I was over that case, and how afraid! Cashel's brother received a year's imprisonment; the homesteaders, in whose hut Cashel hid, received imprisonment, so did the N.C.O. and guards, together with dismissal from the force.

We have laughed many times in after years over an incident which occurred while Walter was out on one of the expeditions in search of Cashel, but at the time it was anything but a laughing matter. Walter and another recruit were out together, and it must always be remembered that these recruits were young lads straight from the life of a large city, quite unaccustomed to their present conditions, and the Cashel case was very good training for them. They came at dusk to an empty farmhouse. Orders had been "Search everything"—houses, stables, haystacks, lofts, etc.—so they carefully fastened their horses to the fence a short distance away and proceeded on foot to the house, circled it, and found a window that could be easily opened, whereupon they climbed quietly in and were halfway across the room when they heard a noise, as of rushing feet, but rather muffled. They were, of course, keyed up to a high pitch of excitement, and said at once that their horses had been stampeded, but when they went to see, their horses were quietly standing where they had been left, so back to the house they went, only to hear again the same noise, and upon further examination they found the small loft of the house simply alive

with field-mice. It had been their feet rushing across the floor above, when they had been disturbed, which had been heard.

During the first winter after Walter had enlisted the last of the evidence was collected in another famous case, that of King and Hayward, which had occurred some time before. These two men had gone into the Slave Lake country, north of Edmonton, Alberta, on a prospecting trip, and only one, King, had returned to civilization. The first cause of suspicion that something was wrong was owing to the fact that a dog belonging to King and Hayward turned up at an Indian camp, and later the Indians found the remains of a big camp fire, where even the leaves on the surrounding trees were scorched and appeared to have grease on them. The Indians told the police that he might have been roasting a whole deer at one time. When the police investigated they found in a near-by slough charred bits of flesh and bone, etc., which they concluded to be human remains, but which had to be so proven. These remains were all carefully bottled and labelled, and a constable from Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, was detailed to bring them down to Toronto for analysis by the Government analyst. Walter at that time, January, 1905, was stationed at Fort Saskatchewan, where he had been sent the previous year. His disappointment at not being sent to Toronto with the exhibits was very great, but, as luck would have it, his best friend there was detailed for the trip.

It might be interesting to note here that Hayward's brother in England had, at precisely this time, several vivid dreams about his brother in Canada that all was not well with him. They so impressed him that he wrote to the comptroller of the force at Ottawa requesting informa-

tion as to his brother's whereabouts. This request reached Ottawa at almost the same time as the information from the Indians reached the police in the North.

I did not know anything about the Hayward and King case until the arrival of the constable, Otto, at our home in Toronto with a letter of introduction from Walter. Walter had often mentioned him to me in his letters, so I knew him well by name. When I saw him I thought something dreadful had happened to Walter. I could not wait for explanations, I was so excited and fearful. I fled weeping to my bedroom, where I could lock myself in and finish my cry to myself. When presently I was composed I came down carrying, quite unconscious of what I had in my hands, a bath towel, into which I had been weeping. We had several guests for tea that afternoon, one couple from the West on their wedding trip, and to this day they make fun of me over the appearance I made with the bath towel. That was the very first mounted policeman I ever saw.

The gruesome tests lasted six weeks. It was wonderful having Otto with us for that length of time. I recall one very amusing encounter. We were walking down Young Street one day when a city policeman stopped us and asked Otto to what organization he belonged. (I might say here that the uniform of the mounted police is very striking and picturesque; red jacket, dark blue riding breeches with a yellow stripe, long brown riding boots, steel jack spurs, Stetson hat, brown leather belt and revolver holster, white cord revolver lanyard.) When told, he was much interested, and asked many more questions, one of which was how much a day was the pay. When he heard "50 cents a day," he was aghast, and said, "Oh, why don't you leave

it and come and join this outfit? Why, we get $2 a day." I shall never forget Otto's disgusted look. He was a very tall fellow—six foot three inches. He looked the Toronto policeman up and down, and replied, "Why, I would not exchange places for $20 a day!" which was quite beyond the other fellow's comprehension.

It might be as well for me to state here that the organization of the force consists of a number of divisions, each division having a headquarters post under command of a superintendent, who is responsible for the maintenance of law and order over a large area, which is again divided into sub-districts under command of inspectors, each of whom is responsible for a number of detachments established at various places in his sub-district. The personnel of a detachment may consist of one or more constables, or an N.C.O. with one or more constables to assist him. The force is the only one in Canada where the officers hold the King's commission; the superintendents rank as majors, the inspectors as captains, in the permanent forces of Canada.

One day, while Walter was still at Fort Saskatchewan, the O.C. called him and said, "Munday, do you think you could manage Lacombe detachment?" Walter replied that he would have a good try at it, anyway. "All right," continued the O.C., "pack your kit and leave by the first train. The chap there at present thinks it too much for him and wants to be placed under an N.C.O. for a few months. Good luck to you!" And so Walter entered upon his first detachment duties, which in this instance was a single man detachment. He was responsible for the enforcement of all criminal laws over a large area, having to act as prosecutor in such cases as well as investigator. He was in the saddle almost every day of the week, and

sometimes far into the night, in order to make a certain farm or ranch house, where he could "put up" for the night. The country was sparsely settled, so that great distances had to be covered, and varied were his cases and experiences. On one of his patrols on the rolling prairie a blizzard suddenly enveloped him, no landmarks to be seen, and it was almost dusk. He rode miles in the right direction as he thought, but only to find that he was lost, and it was then well into the night. He decided to give the horse his head and made no attempt to guide him, with the result that the horse took him to a farmhouse and they were both safe.

Walter's patrols were usually made alone. Occasionally he would arrange to meet a constable from a distant detachment, when information could be exchanged, a ride taken together, and perhaps a sojourn made overnight at a ranch house. In those days the detachments largely consisted of one or two men.

Just a few weeks before Walter left Fort Saskatchewan one of the police came in from Fort Chipewyan with an Indian lunatic. He came to Lac la Biche by dog train and from there to Fort Saskatchewan, about one hundred and fifty miles, by team. He had a very hard trip, as the Indian was violent at times and had to be bound to the sledge, but often had to be loosened to prevent freezing. The constable, after resting a week, started on his return trip, but two days out broke down himself and had to be brought back for treatment. Robert Service has made this case famous, and rightly so, by his "Clancey of the Mounted Police."

Walter did make good at Lacombe, the little town of his first detachment, and had many interesting cases there. When eighteen months had passed after my last meeting

with him " Dad " thought perhaps if he and I met again it would cure us. In July, 1905, therefore, she and I went West and spent two months at Lacombe. At the end of that time Walter and I were not cured and had decided to elope, but " Dad " got wind of it and told us that if we would wait until December she would give her consent, which we did. She, of course, never imagined he could get furlough, but he had a senator friend in the little town, and also we knew dear old Sir Sam Hughes, who came to see us after we returned to Toronto, and promised his influence for the month's leave in December. I remember him whispering to me behind " Dad's " back, " You just get married and don't mind what anyone says."

One of these two friends secured the furlough through the commissioner. Walter arrived at Toronto and the wedding took place, as I have described; the ceremony being performed by Bishop Sweeney.

The O.C. was kind enough to send Walter as far as Stoney Mountain Penitentiary, just outside of Winnipeg, with some prisoners, thus saving part of his travelling expenses, which was very welcome to us at that time.

CHAPTER II

I JOIN MY HUSBAND IN THE WEST

At the end of six months after our marriage I decided to go West, so began my arrangements accordingly, and at the end of the seventh month, in July, 1906, I arrived at Lethbridge, Alberta. In 1905 the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were inaugurated. Prior to that time they were unorganised territories, being part of the great North-West territories. The inauguration ceremonies took place at Edmonton and Regina, the respective capitals of the provinces, and were attended by the then Prime Minister of Canada, Sir Wilfred Laurier. The N.W.M.P. took an active part in the ceremonies, giving a display in riding, etc., and detachment men were called in from all parts for that purpose, Walter attending at Edmonton.

There was a strike on at the Lethbridge coalmines, which were two miles from the town, and Walter was in charge of the temporary detachment there. I telephoned over that I had arrived, which was Walter's first intimation that I had even thought of coming West. The conditions at the mines were such that Walter had to get permission from his O.C. at Lethbridge to leave his detachment for a few hours. I, in the meantime, went to an hotel. Walter, thinking he looked much too young, had grown a moustache. I loathed moustaches, so, of course, that had to be removed before he could appear. One of the men watching him shave said, "Oh, you have spoiled your moustache, your wife will be disappointed," and Walter dared not admit he had had to do it. An hotel was much too expensive a place for us, so we found

a boarding-house with an ex-policeman and his wife, where I was very happy and comfortable, and where I learned a few more household duties, such as ironing shirts, something I had never done in my life, but which I have done thousands of times since.

Walter was on duty day and night, sleeping right at the mines, so each evening I walked over to see him, two miles there and two miles back, pitch dark. No darkness has ever seemed so black to me before or since. The miners were throwing bombs and wrecking the officials' houses. I carried a stick, about the size of a small crop, which gave me great courage. On more than one occasion I have bumped into a man, neither of us seeing anything until we felt the impact. I did not think so much of it then as I have since. Also, I often came across lizards and snakes. There seemed to be quite a number in those days.

While we were there the Indians from the Blood Reserve (Bloods and Blackfeets) came in and had a powwow on the prairie in the exact spot where the Lethbridge City Park now is, the most beautiful little park in the West. The prairie grass then was long and rank. The Indians were naked, except for belts; their bodies were greased and painted to represent gashes in the flesh. They went through a weird, wild dance to the sound of drums, commencing very slowly and gradually working up to a frenzied pitch accompanied by wild, fiendish yells, which turned my blood to ice, my mind being still full of school history telling of the massacres and scalping which used to take place. It was a wonderful sight, and thrilling.

After our short sojourn at that time, I did not see that little park again for eight years, and the transformation then amazed me. I had come from the dry and sun-baked

prairie, where we had not a drop of rain for six weeks, where the ground was split with wide cracks, and as I stepped off the train the glorious sight of this oasis met my eyes. The profusion and variety of flowers were a joy, and as long and as often as I was in the city I spent hours there. A landscape gardener from England had so caused the land to bloom.

In the days when I arrived in Lethbridge as a bride it was against the rules for a constable to marry, and Walter had to report to the O.C. that he had a wife and would like a permanent detachment. The O.C. asked, "Does the commissioner know?" "No, sir," said Walter, much perturbed. "Well, I must tell him. You will probably be dismissed." The commissioner was told, but it just happened that he wanted a man to place on a boundary detachment with a wife who would cook for three other men. When asked if I would go, of course I was delighted and consented with great excitement, but Walter was not appointed to this detachment; Heaven intervened on behalf of the three men, or dear knows what would have been the result to their digestions.

One day, a very short time afterwards, the commissioner wired to know if we would be willing to go North into unsurveyed territory to a detachment at Cumberland House, among the Indians, where there were no other white people. In the meantime Walter had been offered a position in British Columbia at $100 per month, which seemed wonderful, and which he was very much inclined to accept. However, we got out the map and looked up "Cumberland House," which was the first inland post of the Hudson's Bay Company established by Samuel Hearne at the beginning of the eighteenth century. When first the Hudson's Bay Company commenced trad-

ing with the Indians their posts were on the coast of Hudson Bay. Afterwards they went inland to the north end of Lake Winnipeg and across to Grand Rapids, the entrance to the Saskatchewan River, navigable for one thousand miles; and Cumberland House on Cumberland Lake, just off the river and about two hundred and fifty miles from Grand Rapids, was the gateway port of the great North country and West to the Rockies.

We had an hour in which to decide, as it was necessary to leave on that night's train to enable us to reach Cumberland House before the freeze-up, and, moreover, the bank in which were our savings closed at three. We had to have them, for in those days I was not considered, and received neither rations nor transportation. We decided to accept Cumberland House.

After considerable rushing we managed to get away. We reached Prince Albert by rail, where there was a police divisional headquarters post, and reported to the O.C., when we received rations, camp equipment, and instructions for our journey of about three hundred and fifty miles by canoe down the Saskatchewan. From Prince Albert we drove by police team to Fort A la Corne, about fifty miles, to save time and avoid a long string of rapids on the river. The Hudson's Bay Company at Fort A la Corne was the first trading-post I had seen, and we stayed there overnight. A canoe and two Indian guides were awaiting our arrival, and the following day we commenced our trip by water. The first day in a canoe to me was wonderful; utter freedom at last, which I loved, and actually to sleep out at night, but I was afraid of the Indians, and that first night and for a month after reaching Cumberland I carried a revolver in my pocket, unknown to my husband, as I expected to be set upon and scalped at

any moment. When I awakened the first morning and found I was alive, I said, "Well, that is just to let us believe we are safe, they will surely do it to-night." However, they didn't, and I knew after that first month that I was to love the Northern wilderness, every tree, rock, stream, and lake, every leaf and flower, love it in all its moods, and that never again would I care for the life of cities; that here in the solitude of the forests only could I be truly happy.

I lived after that for eight years among the Indians, and grew very fond of some of them. They called me *Esquasis,* meaning "little girl," and some of my friends among the white people call me that also. Walter was called *Semagenus,* meaning "soldier," to be changed later when he had other policemen under him, to *Oo-kee-ma Semagenus,* "chief soldier."

On the afternoon of the third day of our journey down the Saskatchewan we reached Cumberland Lake and had our last camp-fire lunch. A stiff wind was blowing, so the Indians put a sail up on the canoe and we went flying across the lake, a delightful experience to me, who had never been allowed in a sail boat before, though living nearly all my life on Toronto Bay. And so we came to Cumberland House, a youthful, untried pair—Walter a corporal.

> Here with a loaf of bread beneath the bough,
> . . . a book of verse—and thou,
> Beside me singing in the wilderness—
> And wilderness is Paradise enow.

When we landed at Cumberland we found that there were two white families living there. A little girl of ten, daughter of Captain Haight, the chief of the transport for the Company at that point, was on the beach. When she

saw me land she ran to her mother, saying, "Oh, mother, there is a new policeman with his little girl, now I shall have someone to play with." My hair being in a braid down my back, she naturally thought I was still a schoolgirl, which I suppose I really ought to have been. That same little girl is now the mother of a daughter herself.

We remained several days with Captain and Mrs. Haight, who were at that time, as ever afterwards, most kind and generous to us, sharing so many things that we at that season of the year and at that distance from civilization could not obtain for ourselves. A mail reached Cumberland House only once a month, and in the spring and autumn once in two months. Frequently it was longer between mails. This varied according to ice conditions in the lakes and river, and that is how it was until McKenzie and Mann built a railway to The Pas.

Our reception by the company at Cumberland was not very cordial. Although their manager had been in Prince Albert and told our O.C. that everything we could want would be at our disposal, we found there was hardly anything for us—we made our chairs out of barrels. We stayed at the company's house for three weeks while our little home-to-be was being repaired, whitewashed, etc. It was a small log-cabin of two rooms, built by an Indian, but as he had decided to go hunting for the winter he rented it to us. Fortunately it was new, as we had to sleep on the floor for months, for there was no bedstead to be had. Eventually we secured a set of bed-springs, which we set up on four boxes. The first night we were literally eaten alive. I thought it was mosquitoes, though October was late for them, as I had had no experience with other insect pests. When I looked at myself in the morning it was as though I had measles, and the bed-clothes

BABY POLAR BEAR AND CINDERS.

THE SAME BEAR AT BANFF.

facing page 30.

were alive. We had actually to move out in order to fumigate the house. I wept my first tears, for I really was afraid, always having heard that they were the worst affliction one could possibly have in one's abode. Captain and Mrs. Haight took us in again for a few days.

Visiting at Cumberland at this time were a Mr. and Mrs. Simpson. Mrs. Simpson for many years was one of my kindest friends. Being a native of the country and a fluent talker in Cree, she told me a great deal of what I know of customs and traditions of the Indians, which was of great use to me as long as I was with them. Her husband hailed from Scotland, a dignified, amusing old man. I was always very fond of him, but we have not met for many years now. He, at that time, was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Pelican Narrows, north of Cumberland, and visited Cumberland frequently, and later he and Mrs. Simpson lived at The Pas.

On the first occasion of our meeting at Captain Haight's we were discussing actors. He asked if I had seen Irving. I said, " Yes, in the ' Merchant of Venice.' " He enquired how I liked Ellen Terry. I replied that she had not been with him, naming another actress whom I have since forgotten. He was " up in the air " in a moment, literally flew at me, remarking in the most biting sarcasm, " Why, Irving never acted without Terry, you could not have seen him." Poor man! It was over twenty years since he had been home or beyond Prince Albert, but he had forgotten all that. On the same day he asked me if I had read Dumas. Again I replied in the affirmative, adding that I liked him very much. He went on to say that, of course, he had read him in the original, and that I would have lost a good deal by only reading the translation. Now, in those days I was only out of school and could read a

good deal and talk a little French. Later on I made a remark with a French quotation in it of which he understood not a word.

Living at this time also at Cumberland was an English family with eleven children, nine boys and two girls. Two of the boys were in the East, but the rest of the family were all with their Uncle Will, quite a character in his way. He had been a free-trader, but had met the fate of most free-traders in the North. The company had been too strong for him; consequently he had to give up, with thousands of dollars owing him from the Indians and no way of collecting; and so he was teaching school, half-breed and Indian children, and keeping his sister's family—a wonderful brother. They had beautiful things in their little place at Cumberland, fine old china, linen, and silver, and shelves of books. We spent many happy hours with them during our years there, and to me he is a real hero, sacrificing his life for his sister. In the years that were to come, when the Great War overtook us all, he volunteered at once, though much over age, and was engaged as interpreter.

During our first week at Cumberland we attended an Indian dance given for a wedding party. The groom was a young French trader for Revillion's, the bride a half-breed; as soon as we appeared on the scene the bride walked deliberately up to Walter and kissed him, much to my astonishment and his amusement. I learned later that it is the custom for all to kiss the bride. The dance was fast and furious, the first of its kind I had witnessed, and lasted all day and night. Though few of the dancers understood English, they " called off " the changes of the dance in that language. Before long the atmosphere could be cut with a knife. We retired early.

During the second week we had our first caller, an old Indian named James Settee. He was a son of the first Indian convert of that tribe. His brother was at that time incumbent there, and so remained until his death a very few years ago. They had been educated at St. John's College, Winnipeg. James was a very well-read man. Some of his children were named after Shakespearian characters. He was living with his Indian wife on the reservation. He was "delighted to see us, it being most necessary for someone to be there to look after the Indians, as they were learning very bad habits," and so forth and so on, and he kept repeating how delighted he was to see us, but he was the first to be arrested for being drunk.

The day after, in walking through the bush, we came upon a fight among some drunken Indians. Walter attempted to stop them, while I stood on one side terrified and tried to comfort a crying Indian child. We had nowhere to take prisoners and no justice of the peace at that time, so just had to let them go until a magistrate could be appointed, which was "Uncle Will," and then Walter travelled eighty miles by dog team, the first to leave Cumberland after freeze-up, and brought them back to be tried by the magistrate. In liberating them in the first instance they thought he was afraid, not realizing the circumstances, and we learned later that they thought they could do as they pleased. They soon learned better, and we never had any trouble, but for a long time we had no other lock-up than my kitchen, where prisoners were tethered to the stove, and where I had to step over and around them when they were incapacitated.

During the night of the day we had the affair with the Indians I had a very bad shock. I was awakened suddenly by groaning and a violent shake of the bed. I spoke to

Walter, but only heard groans in reply. I hurriedly lighted the lamp, which revealed a sight. He was covered with blood. He had heard a noise outside and, thinking it was the Indians again, had got up to look out of the window. Seeing nothing, he was stepping into bed again, but was farther away than he thought, and fell forward, catching his eye on the screw where the knob should have been. It cut his cheek open, both the under and upper side of the lid and forehead, but, thank goodness, missed the eye itself. I thought he had had a fight, of course, and I do believe from that day to this I always sleep with one eye, certainly with one ear, open. If anyone breathes it wakens me! This is a nuisance to myself and everyone else wherever I may be, but it has also been of service to us very often.

It was during these first weeks at Cumberland I was awakened one night to quite the worst row I have ever heard, blood-curdling yells and screams. Walter partially dressed and went out to investigate. I lighted the lamp, put on my gown and slippers, and waited results. Presently a crowd appeared at the door. The Indian refused to come in when he found where he was, so an attempt was made to leg-iron and handcuff him. Walter easily put him down and held him, but could not do that and iron him also, as the Indian was fighting mad, so he called upon some of the half-breeds standing around to assist. They tried for some time, but were afraid of the Indian, so finally I put the leg-irons on, but could not manage the handcuffs, he was struggling so much, so I sat upon him while Walter put them on, and a funny sight we must have been, the women standing around weeping, ourselves half dressed, my hair streaming, and the struggling, yelling Indian on the ground with me

perched on his chest. As soon as he was in the house he was quiet, very quiet during the rest of the night, and very apologetic the next morning. These drunken orgies were the result of liquor having been brought down the river from Prince Albert by the half-breed crews of freighting scows.

In passing an Indian's house one morning I saw some young pups. In an instant I was down on my knees amongst them. They were dirty but pretty. The next morning Walter came home holding one of them by the neck, such a dirty darling. I grabbed him in my apron, but, oh, the awful smell of fish, etc. So we bathed him, and as neither of us knew the first thing about it, we had the room and water too hot. Poor mite, he keeled over, but I soon revived him, and from that day for twelve years no one ever had a more faithful friend than "Major." He went everywhere with Walter on his patrols, and seemed always to know every word he said. He developed into a good leader, but was only used for that purpose when we were short of train dogs.

The dogs were indeed my constant joy in my new life. I never had been so happy. Every time I went out I saw dozens, and I loved and petted them all, never having any fear. Our own five for our train were chained outside the door, but our Indian guide said he must take them to his place or I would ruin them by petting. We had one, supposedly very vicious, which no one would go near. One day when the guide came in I had this dog in the kitchen eating out of my hand. The guide yelled that he would bite me and backed quickly out. That was too much, so he took them away, but Walter very soon began driving the dogs himself when he learned that any amount of petting did not harm them, but, on the contrary, made

them better dogs. He afterwards became the best dog driver in the country. No one had dogs equal to Walter's, or could compare with him for breaking and driving them. It was my only pleasure in that country, our daily drive with the dogs. I would drop everything at any time to go with them.

We had a diverting incident which nearly proved a disaster. One morning I was ironing, and as I finished each article I hung it around a chair to dry. Walter was going over to the Company's store, and, as he went out, he said, "You have those things too near the stove, they might catch fire." "Oh, they could not," I answered, "there is no danger at all." Off he went, and I went on ironing. The stove pipe ran through the ceiling, which was single boards, and out through a hole in the roof under which I happened to be. Presently something black dropped on my board. After examining it I could not make out what it was, so continued my ironing. Again another piece dropped. I went to the stairs, and as I looked up at the roof it burst into flames. We had only a few pails of water in the barrel (water had to be hauled from the river). I ran screaming outside, and at the same time put the ladder against the side of the house, dashed in for a pail of water, all the time screaming "Fire!" An Indian who happened to understand English heard me. He came running to me and sent his boy flying to the Company's store. Walter arrived, out of breath, with the Company's men, to find me on the roof with a pail of water and the Indian on the other side chopping. Finally, we got it under control, with the hole in the roof the only damage, and then Walter had his mouth ready to say, "I told you so," but I pointed to where the fire had been, nothing at all to do with my clothes, and I said, "Now

let that be a lesson to us both, don't ever let us say to one another 'I told you so,' that anger provoking phrase," and we never have.

There happened to be at the Company's store that day a lumberman from Port Arthur, Ontario. He had come up to see some of his timber limits. He was a huge German-Yankee, weighing close to 280 pounds. He came galloping with the rest, and he never forgot the sight of me on the roof with the water-pail.

I met him many times in the years to follow, and his story of my "fire" was always his introduction of me to his friends. Once when we were travelling by canoe, he and his millionaire partners picked us up in their launch and could not do enough for us. Again, when we were living at The Pas, I was going by hand-car to Hudson Bay Junction to meet my mother. (A hand-car is used by railway section men to travel on when doing repair work on the track. It is operated by man-power by means of handle-bars in the centre, which are pumped up and down and so propel the car along the track. Quite a speed can be attained when four or six men are pumping.) He and a party of his friends had been at The Pas for a duck hunt; one had died suddenly and was being taken out to the railhead, a distance of ninety miles. His coffin, which consisted of a rough wooden box hastily constructed of rough lumber, was my only seat, but the great kindness of the party is not to be forgotten. In still later years, when he and his family were living at The Pas and he had hundreds of men working for him, he would trudge up to my house himself with a pail of milk before breakfast, a rare treat, as there were no cows except his in those days.

These are a few of the things which made life bearable in such isolated places, where there were no comforts nor

conveniences of any kind, to us who had never in our lives lived outside of a city until we joined the force.

Late in October I began to be very much under the weather, very weak, could not walk at all, and was frightfully thirsty all the time. I also suffered from an ulcerated tooth, could not open my mouth, except by prizing it with a knife, which no doubt saved my life, as I could not eat at all for over a month. Walter carried me up and down stairs each day. The nearest doctor was eighty miles away and it was freeze-up time, so that no one could go for him. I learned afterwards that I had been ill with typhoid. Half of my hair came out. Altogether, it was a very anxious time; I finally regained full strength, but was never the same weight again.

My very few visitors at Cumberland were much amused at the arrangement of my house. As I said before, it had two rooms, one upstairs, where we slept, and one downstairs, where we lived and moved and had our being. Naturally, there were four corners to the rooms. In the lower room I had a shelf put up in one corner, and on it my bare dozen very favourite books which I had brought with me—Longfellow, Tennyson, Byron, etc.—one water-colour, and portraits of my old friends arranged in a cross with a small mirror in the centre. That was my library. On the same side of the room, at the other end, I had a corner built in, covered it with chintz, for which I sent to Toronto, and made a dozen pillows from duck-down. That was my drawing-room. Across from it I had a long cupboard, loaned to me by the Company, *without* doors. It held all we had of dishes, pots, pans, and food. Beside it was the stove. That was my kitchen. In the centre of the room was a table three feet by two feet, our dining-room. As anyone entered I always said, " Come into the

drawing-room," or "library," whichever it was to be, and if ever we had a guest for a meal I sat them with their back to the kitchen, so that between courses I might wash the dishes for the next course. Some of my wedding linen and silver would be on the table, and although we had very little to eat we had great fun.

On our first wedding anniversary in December we decided to "dress up" for dinner, Walter in his red jacket and I in a dinner frock, which I might say was never worn again, being many years behind the times when the day came on which I could wear it. We were just in the midst of everything when Revillion's manager came in. We were a sight, I am sure, and he probably thought we were crazy. I sat the balance of the evening with a woollen cape around me.

This same man made fun of us when first we arrived. He came in one morning when Walter was cleaning his shoes and said, "Oh, you will soon get over that here. What is the use of cleaning shoes and shaving, no one to see us but Indians?" Walter replied that he always had kept himself clean, when quite alone on detachment on the prairie, and he did not see why he should not now. It was not many weeks before that same man was shaving and keeping his shoes clean, too. We had dinner one night with him in his little cabin when another lumberman was there. The surroundings were so new to me: the room half-lighted, those two men unshaven and unshorn, in their heavy woollen shirts and no coats, just wolfing their food, and also the food itself, which was cooked by an Indian. How some men under those conditions carry on is a mystery. We discussed this meal often in after years, and the lumberman has told me how I was the first white girl he had seen in many months,

and that was why he talked so much and regretted not having a change of clothes; that, of course, I did not know at the time.

Our semi-weekly baths were a great deal of trouble in more ways than one. In winter we melted snow, as we had to conserve our drinking water. It was brought to us over a mile and cost 25 cents a barrel. A huge fire was made in our Carron stove, which all the white people used at that time. The stoves had originally been brought out by the Company from the Old Country and were a hundred years old. The snow was melted and the room made warm. When all was ready, Walter went for a walk. I hurried through and got into bed. Then he returned, emptied the water outside, and, of course, had his. The hut was small, and often my "library" floor was badly splashed, but the "boards," having no carpets or rugs, were not damaged. Nearly always at night the stove was filled with green birch logs to keep the fire going all night if possible. They sizzled and sizzled. I can hear them yet as I did before falling off to sleep. The kettle, filled and left boiling, by morning was often frozen solid, and the house, oh, so cold, so cold! That first winter was a bitter one. We had 62° below zero. Walter got all ready the night before, and with birch-bark kindling it did not take long to get a fire started, but the first getting up required great courage. During this first winter at Cumberland the Company and ourselves were the only people fortunate enough to have coal oil to burn for a light, everyone else using candles.

My ingenuity was taxed to the very limit for a change in meals. It was just as well I had not wasted my time at home learning to cook, for, with the exception of bread, nothing was the same as in my eastern home. Here we

had moose and deer in winter, ducks and geese in spring and autumn, fish during the summer. Oh, how tired we did get of the fish, baked, fried, boiled, boiled, fried, baked, and of fish-balls! But I should add that, next to beaver baked and the boiled beaver tail, the livers of the white fish were almost our greatest delicacy. Rolled in crumbs and fried they are better, if possible, than oysters, though I am fond of all Northern food. Smoked deer tongue is very fine, but perhaps, after all, my greatest favourite is the moose nose. It was always a wonderful treat to me. We never used canned meat in those days. We had some dried moose meat that was like so many boiled chips, and pemmican; the pemmican was good when only mixed with marrow, or marrow and berries, but I did not like it sweet. We had no eggs, and for some years only condensed milk; no *klim* (powdered milk), or evaporated cream, so that everything was sweet. I could not make any savouries, and such cakes! I thought one day, " Well, I can at least have potato salad if I can manage the dressing with egg powder and condensed milk." I was in the middle of its cooking and greatly interested when Walter came in and calmly announced that he had cut his foot. He was so cool about it that I never even looked around, just answered telling him to take off his shoe and get a basin, I would attend to it in a minute. When I did look around, such a sight. He had mistaken his foot for a tree, cut through his rubber overshoe, moccasin, and heavy sock, and just missed the cord of the big toe. There was blood everywhere. He has the scar of the wound to this day. It was his first experience with an axe, but very far from his last. He developed into a splendid axeman, and could cut as much fuel wood in an hour as an ordinary Indian would cut in a day. Time is no object to the Indian.

Among my culinary duties, bread-making was the most difficult of all. To begin with, the yeast was always stale, and it required, as I thought, and, in fact, had been taught, so much kneading, and then the keeping of the sponge warm; oh dear, oh dear, what a task! Walter always declared that bread-making was more trouble and bother than twins would have been. With all my care it would so often be heavy. Finally, we sent for hops, and as soon as they arrived with the mail and some yeast, as nearly fresh as it was possible to obtain it there, I made my own yeast, and so a little of the difficulty was overcome.

And so I came to my first Christmas away from home, lacking all the joy it had always meant. I had never missed hanging up my stocking, and, oh! I did so want to hang it up now; but there would be nothing put in it, there were no shops, no mistletoe and holly, nor anything which meant Christmas. I hung it up, however, just the same, and was never more surprised and delighted in my life than when next morning I found a box of candy from the Haights and a pair of four-point Hudson Bay blankets from Walter. Wonderful, wonderful it seemed! The four-point blankets were so new to me. They are marked at one end with four black lines a few inches long, the points denoting the size, and they range from half a point to four points, the latter being for a full-sized double bed. They are manufactured in Scotland and brought out by the Company for trade. They are of all colours with a wide black stripe top and bottom, fleecy and warm, and wear almost for ever. The Indians always maintained that the white ones were the warmest, and many of them who could afford it had coats made out of the white blankets, with the result that in a short time

they became terribly grimy, whereas, the coloured ones would have been much more serviceable.

We spent the day at the Haights and had a very happy time, having, instead of turkey for our dinner, moose meat, which is every bit as good.

CHAPTER III

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF DETACHMENT LIFE

New Year's Day, which they call *O-chay-to-kisse-cow*, meaning "kissing day," is a big day among the Indians; everyone calls upon everyone else, taking them presents and kissing them. I was warned that I might have callers, and prepared a batch of cookies in readiness, and I did have over fifty of them in twos, threes, and fours. With the first lot I was being very polite and gave them each a cup of tea and passed a plate of cookies. The first squaw to whom I handed it calmly emptied the whole plate into her handkerchief and gave me back the empty plate. I knew if they all did likewise my cookies would never last, so to each of the others I gave three or four on their saucers. They all, as they arrived, men as well as women, kissed me, a most unsavory proceeding to say the least. In the evening we attended a dance on the reserve at the chief's house. These dances vary but little from those at weddings. The dancers were all full-blooded Indians. The married squaws are usually very, very corpulent, and their motion in the dances is such a strange up-and-down movement. The jigging by the men, known as the Red River jig, is really done very cleverly and is so swift. When we arrived at the house the chief was not there. The women were all sitting around on the floor, while a small space was left in the centre for the dancers. A box was found for me, where I sat in state. Presently the chief returned and came at once to greet us. As I reached to shake hands he bent and kissed me full on

LEAVING CAMP IN THE BUSH COUNTRY.

facing page 44.

the mouth with his frozen moustache, he, of course, believing he was doing the right thing. It had been unexpected by me, but I had to take it without making a scene, very much to the enjoyment of the Haight family. I can still feel that wet, cold kiss.

The European type of clothes was worn by these Indians, except that the women wore varied coloured shawls and silk-worked moccasins, and the men embroidered silk-work moose leather and deerskin coats. Their costumes were very unlike those of the Indians of the prairies, who, on fête days, wear beautiful bead-embroidered clothes, and the men gorgeous eagle-feathered head-dresses; even their saddles are heavily embroidered with beads.

When it was time to return home Walter could not be found. I went on with the others, and when I reached home it was in darkness. I said good-night and went on in. Before I could light the lamp I could feel I was not alone. I stood petrified for a moment, but would not retreat, and so had to go on lighting the lamp. Upon looking slowly around I saw there on the floor, shackled to the stove, a huge Indian, Jeremiah Friday. I stared at him in dismay for a few minutes, not knowing what to do. However, I realized that I must simply wait for Walter, and as he was so long in coming I finally decided to go to bed, but to do so I had to climb over Jeremiah. At last I screwed up courage, expecting him to grab my ankle, but he was quite peaceful. I was soon sound asleep, long before Walter returned with his next prisoner in the small hours of the morning.

During the first week in January, 1907, we were invited to attend the wedding at The Pas (eighty miles down the Saskatchewan River from Cumberland) of a daughter of

Mr. Halcrow, a grand old man, a Scotsman, of course, in charge of the Company's trading-post at that point. He had come out to Canada by sailing ship from the Orkney Islands in his early youth, landing at York Factory on Hudson Bay, where he learned boat-building and many other things. He had married early, and when we knew him he had thirteen children, eight boys and five girls. He had vowed that none of the latter should ever marry any but British men, and they never did. He could do almost anything. His inlay work of different woods, with bits of brass, copper, and ivory, was beautiful. He made work-boxes, cribbage-boards, and checker-boards. He gave me one of the latter, which I greatly prized. Some vandal helped himself to it from among my curios. Mr. Halcrow had also made suits and shoes for his boys, and, best of all, kitchen utensils, some of which the family were still using. Works of art they really were. We were present at The Pas when he made his first trip to Winnipeg. He had never seen trains, telephones, electric light, trams, nor motor-cars, nor, of course, many, many other things which the rest of us had been accustomed to all our lives and did not think of noticing. The account of his trip cannot be forgotten. He was our justice of the peace for years, and was an upright, honest man in all his dealings, on one occasion imposing a fine on his own son for cruelty to animals.

For his daughter's wedding we prepared to make my first trip by dog train, a distance of eighty miles, a real epoch in my life. It was 35° below zero when we started, Captain Haight and his daughter Lillie, who was to be bridesmaid, Walter and myself, two Indians, and two dog trains. Lillie and I each sat in a cariole, which is a toboggan with canvas or moose-skin sides, made up by stretch-

ing two ropes from the turned head of the toboggan to a flat board stood on end at the rear and used for a back, the canvas sides then being laced to the ropes. I was *so* excited over the prospect, but by the time our guide had tucked me in all prospect of pleasure was gone. I was half reclining, with my arms close at my sides and the robes so tight around me I could not budge one inch in any direction. Of course, I thought it was the way I must stay, and I stood it for a few miles, vowing to myself that it would be my first and last trip by dogs. Walter kept coming up to see how I was—he and Captain Haight were running behind the toboggans and occasionally standing on the end of the toboggans for a rest—and, finally, I asked if I must remain trussed up as I was for two days, or might I breathe now and then. Whereupon I was loosened and raised, enabling me to breathe again, with the result that I found it, as I had hoped, a most delightful way of travel.

We arrived at The Pas on the second evening in the midst of great preparations for the wedding. The ceremony took place the next morning at the historic little church, whose furnishings had been made by the members of the relief expedition for Franklin when they wintered there one year. We returned to the house, and the men of the party were treated to sips of frozen champagne in earthenware cups, in which they drank the health of the happy pair. The ladies of the party, numbering five white ones, were not invited to participate. The wedding breakfast was a sit-down meal, consisting in the main courses of cold boiled duck and cold boiled beef, which last I soon learned had been brought by dog sledge from Prince Albert (there being no cows in the country), tea without milk, pickles, and, of course, cake, home-made and hand-

trimmed, wonderful to see. Then the dance commenced and was kept up all day and all night. The strange and fantastic dances, which I had never seen before, were a great treat to watch. Some of the dances were the same as I had seen at Cumberland, but when danced by white people seemed much more weird and outlandish. I was asked to take part and tried my best, but could only stand up for one change. They were too fast and furious for me, the men gradually removing first coats and then waistcoats as they got heated from their violent exertions.

When I thought it time I retired to the little guest-room, heated by a stove half in my room and half in the dining-room, which was also the ball-room. Very little sleep I had that night. The bridal couple left the next morning by dog sledge for what proved to be a very happy married life at a post further down the river. (They had their twelfth child this year.) We remained another day, meeting again the one or two white people and a very famous old trapper, who could far outdo any Indian in the country. I thought him a very old man then, but he is still alive, and has had three wives since that time. He could not have been as old as I thought, one's idea of age changes as one grows older.

Our return trip was just as pleasant. We saw moose along the river-banks, and where we camped that night with some Indians huge plates of moose meat were served to us, as good as any beef, and far better than most other meats.

During the following eight years, when no special duty called, I went by dog train east and west, north and south, hundreds of miles altogether, always loving this way of travel better and better, sleeping at night out in the open, never in a tent, even in winter, when the thermometer

went often to 40° below zero, and on one or two occasions to 60° below. In the morning my eyelashes would be frozen together so that I could not open them until the frost was rubbed away.

On one of our winter trips, one day as we emerged from a portage, which is a narrow trail through the bush from one lake or river to another, we saw just ahead of us on the frozen lake three deer. Now, deer are very much more curious than moose, the latter are off at the slightest sound, but the deer seem to like to know what is what. First they stood, all three of them, "father, mother, and child," until we were almost upon them. Major had been plodding along behind and had at first not seen them, and neither had the train dogs, as the wind was in the wrong direction. Such a row as they all set up when they saw the deer, we had great difficulty in holding them, but Major was off after the deer and did not return to us until long after we had camped for the night, absolutely done up, of course.

Another amusing experience we had with a moose in summer when we were travelling by canoe. A terrific rainstorm coming on, we went ashore to shelter under the trees, and were sitting as usual, silent, each huddled under a tree. Suddenly there was a crashing behind us. We thought it was a bear. Walter turned his head, and there at his very elbow was a magnificent moose. They stared at one another for the space of a second, all of us so astonished, when Walter reached for his rifle and the moose crashed off. Walter fired a shot, but the moose kept going. We followed and found he had been hit. We finally came up with him and were able to take fresh meat home. We had had nothing but fish for a month.

In the spring of the first year one of our men, who had

been stationed at The Pas for a month, got into trouble. The justice of the peace sent for Walter. They had laid a charge against the man, and we had to keep him at Cumberland until he could be taken to Prince Albert at open water, which that year proved very late. We had him for two months in our small quarters, and it was just at this time my teeth commenced to bother me. For six weeks I never lay down, but propped myself in bed with pillows and the hot-water bottle. I suffered agony; in fact, at times was delirious. Captain Haight gave me a small portion of brandy, thinking it would make me sleep. One night I had it "neat" in a glass by the bedside, and during the night reached out to get it, but, of course, upset it. As I mentioned before, the flooring was single boards with wide cracks. The brandy went straight through and into the mouth of the man below, who was sleeping with his mouth open, snoring. A very surprised and pleased man he was. He could not at first believe it was not a dream. Walter slept on two steamer trunks and was up two or three times during the night to heat water for me.

At last one morning I became desperate. I jumped up, put on my bedroom slippers, skirt and shawl, and dashed madly over to Captain Haight's house, burst into his room, and begged him to pull out my tooth. I knew he had pulled Indians' teeth out now and then. So up he got, his wife saying, in such a quiet way, which I shall never forget, though I noticed nothing at the time, "Perhaps Mrs. Munday will wait downstairs until you are dressed." However, he only pulled on a pair of trousers, and down he came prepared for business. He placed me in a wooden arm-chair with one arm around behind him and my other hand clutching the arm

so that I could not interfere with him. Walter came in at that moment, having found me by letting Major lead the way, and he held my hand, and so, just as the sun was coming up through the trees, out the tooth came; awful pain, but, oh! such a relief, though not for long. That night the one on the other side started aching, and I had the same suffering to go through again, all the time hoping the ice would go out and we could get to Prince Albert and have a dentist to save the tooth, but I could not put up with it, and so the second one had to come out. Six weeks of agony I had.

Soon after the break-up came, and we started off to Prince Albert. The ice was piled sixty and seventy feet high on the banks in places, and the ground damp everywhere. The Indians were never dry for the whole week of going, and we were not much better. The Saskatchewan was flowing very swiftly, and we were travelling up stream, an exceedingly slow process, so that a great deal of tracking had to be done (hauling the canoe by a long line), which necessitates walking in water to the knees very often. Then it rained and snowed and sleeted. In the middle of one such storm we met Captain McLeod of the Hudson's Bay Company in a canoe on his way to Cumberland to put the river boat in readiness for the summer freighting. I was wet, cold, and miserable. He insisted upon stopping in midstream and giving me a drink of whisky. It did warm me up, but he did not offer any other member of our party even a nip. Then we went ashore and had a hot dinner of bear meat. They had killed a bear the day before. Then he went flying downstream, and we went dragging up. Only those who have struggled up a swift running river can appreciate the hard work. After a week in Prince Albert we returned to our

northern home, very much more comfortable in every way. We met several moose and hundreds of ducks and geese. When we returned to Cumberland from this trip we took with us a small ice-cream freezer and a soda syphon. We could always get a piece of ice from the Company's ice-house, and I, being very fond of ice-cream sodas, made them frequently, to take after our tennis games. Not having any straws, I used some of the reeds from the sloughs, though in after years I did not have even those, and used instead a stick of macaroni. There is always a way out!

I remember one amusing incident regarding one of the traders at Cumberland post who was extremely fond of liquor. He started on a duck-hunt and had two bottles with him, which he put in his rubber boots. The Indian who accompanied him did not know of the contents, and when making the landing at night just threw them ashore, of course breaking the bottles and the contents being nearly all spilled. The man was distracted but resourceful, and was determined to save some. In each rubber boot was a sock, which had absorbed some of the liquor, and this he squeezed into a cup and so had enough for one night-cap. He was an educated half-breed and king of the colony. He had lost his father, and, I think, two brothers from drowning, and lived in constant fear of meeting the same fate. He had a small launch, in which we often used to go out, but at the first sign of wind he would run for shore. He was kind in his way and would try and bring me a few extra articles for the table on some of his trips out. His son, whom we knew so well as a little boy, is now a champion light-weight boxer. I remember this little boy and his two brothers rushing to me for protection one day because an owl had flown over their house, which, accord-

ing to an old Indian superstition, meant someone in the house was going to die.

His father's successor, whom I will call John, socially was good company, and his wife was charming. She did many favours for me which I have never forgotten, and we had one memorable visit with them.

When we were living at The Pas, before John moved there, Walter had a patrol to make to Red Earth via Cumberland, a return trip of one hundred and seventy-five miles by dog train. I went with him to Cumberland, where the wife of John was ill at the time; I remained there with her to do the cooking for the family, which numbered eight, and with a visiting doctor, an Indian maid, and myself, eleven in all. The maid cooked the breakfast and I attended to the rest of the meals and prepared the food in advance, which would keep after I had returned to my own home, such as fruit cakes and cookies. Oh, those cookies, sixty dozen in all, counted in great glee by the children and packed away! When Walter returned from Red Earth and the day of our departure for The Pas arrived it was very stormy. We had only one pair of snow-shoes, and were unable to borrow more. The Indian, who goes ahead of the dogs to break trail, must have the one pair, and we had to manage as best we could. It was a harrowing trip; we could not make any of our regular stopping camps, so we must sleep in the open, but this was the least of our inconveniences. The trip lasted three days instead of one and a half. The strain on our muscles from wading through that soft, deep snow caused every part of our bodies to ache; we were utterly and completely exhausted upon our arrival. I had had to walk more than usual. Major was very, very sick and could hardly struggle along. I had him in the cariole most

of the way. We did not have blessings in our hearts for the great storm god, *kee-wa-tin* (north wind), after that trip.

Shortly before this time Agnes C. Laut had passed through Cumberland, remaining over a day or so. She heard some fearful and marvellous tales! She was the first in Canada to realize the amazing wealth of romantic history that lay back of the opening up and exploring of the middle and far west of Canada. Among her outstanding works are: "Lords of the North," and "Conquest of the Great North-West."

Some of the Indians were very clever workers in silk on deerskin. One day several of us were admiring some moccasins just brought in by a woman. Teddy Stevenson, an old-timer in the country, happened to be there. He turned and asked me if I thought I could do work like that. I replied that of course I could not, never having attempted anything of the kind. He said, "Well, now, I'll tell you what I will do, if you can do the silk work on a pair of moccasins before spring I will give you a pail of candies." Imagine a *pail* of candies, when candies were so scarce that often for months I did not taste them! I took up the challenge at once and started on the moccasins the next day, finishing them to his satisfaction and my own pleasure within a month. I bless him often for those sweets, though they were well earned—deerskin is not the easiest material in the world to sew on. Sweets were a rare luxury. I have spent hours sitting on the counter in the Company's store with a file digging gumdrops out of a pail of mixed candy, the pail having been soaked in water in transit. Another way in which I sometimes obtained a few extra sweets was through the carelessness of John in forgetting to take down the flag

before sundown. On the first occasion he reported at once to Walter that it had been stolen. Walter did not know I had taken it, and was endeavouring to locate it when all the time it was safely hidden in the house. There used to be an old penalty of ten dollars given to anyone finding the Union Jack up after sundown, but finally I told John that I would be satisfied with some sweets.

CHAPTER IV

CUMBERLAND HOUSE—MY FIRST NORTHERN SUMMER

The mosquitoes being so bad in the bush, we could not remain in our little log-house during the summer months, and moved over into a three-roomed house, this time in the Company's fort enclosure on the shore of Cumberland Lake. The old stockade still enclosed the grounds, and at six o'clock the bell was rung, and after that time no Indian was allowed in the enclosure except upon very urgent business. Two little old cannon were outside our door by the flagstaff. They were fired off on state occasions, and once nearly blew Captain Haight and Horace Belanger into the next world. Also, we were given a piece of ground adjoining, which was considered useless, as it had been used for growing potatoes for many years. The whole garden enclosure was full of rhubarb, but this was not allowed to be used and it afterwards all went to seed. The whole settlement, half-breeds also, could not have eaten the amount that was there.

We are both fond of gardening. I sent to Toronto for seeds, and though we have had many gardens since that time, not one of them has ever been quite the same or any better than our first one away in the North. Everyone was talking about it, and the priest, who had been many years at Cumberland and always had a fine garden, came to see it. We were a very proud pair. The next summer we were not allowed to have the same plot, but were given a very pebbly bit in the centre of the big garden, and though we had good results, they did not equal the previous year's display.

In our first summer, 1907, we received word that my mother was coming out to spend a month with us, so in the month of July we started off by canoe to meet her at a place called High Portage, which is on Cedar Lake, a distance of over two hundred miles down the Saskatchewan. We parted at The Pas, Walter going to other places on patrol while I went the balance of the way by York boat. It being downstream, we made good time and were very comfortable, there being so much more room in that kind of boat. Walter followed later. Mother and I met at High Portage. She had come by way of Winnipegosis by rail, from there across Lake Winnipegosis by a fishing trawler to a portage, across which was High Portage on Cedar Lake. We remained overnight there, a night which is still vivid in my mind for its misery. The mosquitoes and bulldog flies were out in countless millions, attracted by the fish camps, for there was nothing else at High Portage. Besides this, we had other causes of discomfort, as can well be imagined, two lone women among so many fishermen and with countless dogs wandering around, fighting and growling all night. We dared not step outside in the pitch darkness in case of stepping on them and so being eaten up.

We met at High Portage another mounted policeman, who had been sent there for the summer months. He accompanied us upon our return to Cumberland House, and while there sprained his ankle badly, which made it necessary for him to remain at Cumberland while Walter returned to High Portage to attend to his duties for him. It was his first experience in the North or of outdoor life, and he had quite a chapter of accidents, breaking dishes, falling down cellar, knocking two of us out while playing tennis by hitting us with the balls, upsetting us from

a canoe while duck-hunting, and finally dropping his roll of bedding overboard when stepping from the canoe to shore. It would all have caused much merriment, as such minor accidents do in the North, had it not been for his quick temper, which spoiled an otherwise pleasant memory.

On our trip home we were wind-bound at Chimawawin, a trading-post, where the bride and groom of the previous January were living, and there we were kept by severe head winds and rains for ten days when I was longing to get back to the garden and Major, but there is an end to all things, and, finally, we got started. The current of the Saskatchewan is strong in many places, about six miles an hour, and so it was not until the sixth day that we reached Cumberland, by that time quite out of food. The weather, though fairly mild, continued gusty, but the nights were marvels of beauty with the ever-changing Northern Lights. It is impossible to tell of their wonders, ribbons and streamers and plumes of all shapes and sizes and gorgeous colours, covering at times the whole heavens and making the nights quite light. Then the almost constant crackling of them! The Indians used to whistle, as they would say, to make them dance. Travelling by canoe was something new to my mother, also sleeping out at night, but she enjoyed it immensely.

I had taken my tennis rackets when first I went North, just because I happened to have them with me, but we did not have a net or at first anything with which to mark out a court, so we used a fish net, and four antlers of moose for the four corners, and left the rest to the imagination, but I am sure we enjoyed that tennis more than any we ever had before or since. Being right on the edge of Cumberland Lake we always had a swim afterwards, and

then we were ready for almost anything to eat, which often was not very much. In summer it was mostly fish and dried smoked meat, which had been dried by the Indians over a low, smoky fire for hours and hours (moose meat), and was very often fly-blown in the process. This had to be soaked overnight and then boiled for hours again to be made at all possible of mastication; but hungry people, I have found, can eat anything without many complaints.

My mother remained with us at Cumberland until the end of September before starting homeward. I went with her as far as High Portage, travelling to The Pas by canoe and from there to Cedar Lake by fish boat. On the journey we had what might have proved a fatal accident. We were anchored at Cedar Lake. The crew had gone ashore to an Indian dance and "Dad" and I were alone on board. It was early in October, a terrific gale with sleet was blowing. We were in bed and I was sound asleep when "Dad" called me and asked if I heard a noise like water dripping. I listened a moment, and as I was lying on my face I pulled up the corner of the mattress, which was supported on crossed boards a few inches from the floor, and flames burst out in my face. Fortunately, I had filled the water-jug before retiring. I dashed it into the corner and ran outside, in my nightgown and bare feet in that awful storm, yelling "Fire!" We could not get ashore except by canoe from the boat, and the crew had the canoes, and not a soul could hear in that terrific wind, but again luck was with us. One of the men had become tired of the dance and was coming back when he heard me yelling. He got quickly on board, and such a fight we had, I carrying water and the man chopping the boards away! Fortunately, another member returned in the

midst of it or we never could have saved the boat. Captain Sifton was a very grateful man next morning that we had been on board. Usually they did not care to be bothered with women as passengers.

It was rather an unlucky trip all round. Walter met me at The Pas on my way home from High Portage, and on our way through the Tearing River Rapids (a short-cut off the Saskatchewan River near Cumberland) the Indian's paddle slipped on a rock, causing us to turn quickly and head downstream again at a very dangerous place. The Indian was steering and Walter was paddling in the bow. The man managed to wedge his paddle between two rocks, but could not hold us, so we had to jump out and wade and haul the canoe out of the rapids. In October weather, near freeze-up, it was very bad wading in that water, and then we had still six miles to go across the lake. I did not know whether I had feet or not by the time we reached home.

I am reminded of another trip which might have ended seriously for us. During our first winter Walter and I were making a trip to an Indian camp by dog train and without a runner (that is, an Indian guide who goes ahead of the dogs to break trail) when we stopped on a portage to camp for the night. Walter had given up smoking for a few weeks and so had not thought of matches. I was wearing one of his old pea-jackets, in the pocket of which I found three broken matches. We obtained dry wood, cut some chips, and struck the match, using the utmost care to keep it alight, but a puff of wind blew it out, and each of the others in turn, and there we were at dusk, fifteen miles from any encampment with dogs too tired to travel any further, and the thermometer, so we learned later, registering 40° below zero. We did not know just

what to do, and as we stood discussing our position Walter was kicking at an old stump where a previous camp fire had been made by Indians. As he did this a small cloud of smoke arose; instantly we both dropped to our knees and commenced to blow on the old stump, adding a little of the dried moss which hangs on some spruce trees, and soon we had a brisk, warming fire, which we kept going all night to be sure having one in the morning. The old stump had evidently been smouldering since the morning or perhaps before, and while in this instance it was of great help to us, it shows how easily a forest fire could be started in summer by a careless camper. Never have I from that day travelled without matches. They were the first article I always put in the food box. Even in these days when lighters are so much used, I always have a match tucked away somewhere.

Taking our Northern life altogether, we had very few accidents of any kind, and no serious one, for Walter always maintained that accidents as a rule meant carelessness, and he believed in the old saying: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

My greatest privation was my lack of reading material. Books had always been my great pleasure. I agree fully with Thomas à Kempis where he says, "I have sought for rest everywhere, but have found it nowhere, except in a little corner with a little book," or with Lamb, "I love to lose myself in others' minds. When I am not working I am reading. I cannot sit and think. Books think for me." At home I would hide in the basement for hours, while Scott, Thackeray, Dumas, and Dickens held me spellbound, so that it was my greatest hardship to have only a book now and then. We soon disposed of everything to read in the settlement, then we decided to

continue our studies, from the aforementioned Uncle Will. I went on with French and Walter took accountancy, followed since then by other subjects at various times when the opportunity arose.

We tried to arrange our time so that we would not be lonely nor tired of our very limited occupations, so we studied one night, played chess or cribbage alternate nights, went out with the dogs to exercise both them and ourselves in the afternoon. In the mornings I did my housework and Walter any official work he had to do around the settlement, or reports, etc. Sundays we went over to the Anglican Mission on the Indian Reserve, the Rev. Mr. Settee in charge. The service was in Cree, and it was truly remarkable to see with what fervour the Indians followed the service. The Indians were all Protestants and the half-breeds Roman Catholics. The clergyman always said a few words in English for our benefit. He could change from one language to the other without the least difficulty.

The days just flew, no time has ever passed so rapidly. Our youth was flying and we did not realize it. Day in and day out, year in and year out, Walter was steadily plodding along, keeping law and order among ten bands of Indians and among the whites scattered throughout the country. While those on the outside were living normal lives among their own kind and enjoying the fruits of civilization, we had forgotten what the outside world was, and we were forgotten by them. Only those who have lived the life know what that means. I feel very sad now as I look back at those years. It was well for our peace of mind that we did not think of such things at that time. We were most happy together and nothing else mattered; but how unfair life is!

At this time we commenced keeping a little book with various items of interest in it. Among other items was one page marked "Don'ts for our Old Age." It is headed by a quotation from Thomas Moore: "There's nothing half so sweet in life as Love's Young Dream." Thank goodness, the dream has endured through life! A few of the "Don'ts" are most amusing:

"Don't be critical of youth."

"Don't be intolerant of youth."

"Don't get careless of dress and shoes, hair and shaving."

"Don't want to sit by the fire and knit or smoke."

"Don't get tired of going about and so stagnate."

"Don't grow old, keep always young by keeping youth in our hearts."

These "don'ts" were evidently made from observations of others at that time and of their attitude to us. I wonder if we are living up to them to-day?

The life was much harder on Walter than on myself. I only had to do without intercourse with white women, meeting only one here and there now and then, and without the conveniences of life, but Walter had long, arduous trips to make all the time and to cope with all that they entailed.

CHAPTER V

WE MOVE TO THE PAS

Friends my soul with joy remembers,
How like quivering flames they start,
When I fan the living embers
On the hearthstone of my heart.

LONGFELLOW.

AFTER two happy years at Cumberland we moved to The Pas. The Indians at that time were about to surrender five hundred acres of their reserve on the south side of the river to the Dominion Government for a town site, which was afterwards surveyed into lots and is now the town of The Pas. The Indians moved on to their reserve on the north side of the Saskatchewan River. We lived in a little log-house for two years on the site where now stand the Roman Catholic Mission buildings. After that time the Indian Department doctor there built a real house for us, five rooms and a hole in the ground for a cellar, and a verandah, quite a mansion after our two-roomed log-houses for four years, but he spoiled it all by painting it the brightest, most outlandish blue I ever saw in my life. He was a Frenchman, and to this day cannot understand why I refused to live in it until he had it repainted. It was a landmark for miles up the river. Finally, he gave in, and we lived there until he left the Government service and had to have it for himself.

During this time there were three other white families at The Pas—the Rev. Mr. Edwards and family, who had charge of the Anglican Mission, Mr. Bagshaw and family, his assistant, who intended to enter Holy Orders, and the doctor before mentioned.

Mr. Edwards and family were from England, as so many of our missionaries were, and through all these years we have remembered the eloquent sermons which he preached when more white settlers came in. It was with very deep regret that we learned of his death at a comparatively early age. It is most unfortunate that we have not more of his type in our missions; I do not mean this as a reflection on any other missionaries, but that we have too few.

A short time after our arrival the Hudson Bay Factor and Captain Haight from Cumberland were moved to The Pas, and so we were quite a community.

Mrs. Edwards' sister, Miss Coates, known always by us as *Maskooch* (being Cree for "perhaps") because it sounded so like "Miss Coates," spent a year with us while she was teaching at the Indian school across the river. She was, and is, a charming English girl with a great sense of humour, very clever and accomplished, and a favourite with all. The sketch of my beloved Major is by her.

The railway had not arrived at The Pas at this time, although the steel was nearing, having branched off from the main line of the old Canadian Northern Railway between Winnipeg and Prince Albert at a place called Etcomami (Cree, "water flowing three ways"), now called Hudson Bay Junction. We made frequent trips to Etcomami by hand-car from end of steel, for various reasons: sometimes official for Walter and to take the train from Etcomami to Prince Albert, his divisional headquarters, and sometimes for extra delicacies in the way of provisions such as good butter (which we seldom had), brown sugar, cheese, unsweetened evaporated milk, which is so much better for coffee and general cooking, etc. We attached a platform to the hand-car; this formed

an extension at each end, with the result that so much more could be carried and we could sit in comfort; that is those of us who did not have to pump the car, and a most awful task it was, twenty-eight thousand times to pump up and down between the two points, The Pas and Eteomami. With nothing else to do, one day on the trip I reckoned it up, so many rails to the mile, and so many pumps to the rail. This knowledge made the pumpers more tired, I think. We usually made the trip in two days, if the wind was not too head on, sleeping in the bush at night, and later on in section houses, which were unoccupied. We frequently saw moose in the days before the rail had arrived at The Pas, and when only construction trains were running "now and then." We went part way by dog train and the balance of the way in the caboose, which is the end car on a construction train and is used by the train crew only. Never in all my travels have I received greater courtesy than from the crews of those trains. They gave up their beds for me at any time and cooked such good meals in the caboose for us. They eat and sleep there, also there is a "lookout" on top where one can sit comfortably and survey the country. It was my favourite seat, of course.

I must relate a little event that occurred in connection with these crews some years later. I was on my way to Winnipeg and the heat in the sleeping-car was simply terrific. I was nearly overcome with it. Hearing someone coming through, I popped my head out of my berth and asked him to turn off the heat. It was the conductor. He was just about to pass on when suddenly he said, "Aren't you Mrs. Munday from The Pas?" I replied that I was, and he said, "Don't you remember me, I met you four years ago on the construction train up there; you

made a few trips with me?" And there he sat upon his heels in the coach for over half an hour, talking of the times up there and the different characters we had both known. He was now a passenger train conductor on a main line train. In the morning, as I was going to breakfast in the dining-car, the porter told me a gentleman had told him to ask me to wait and have breakfast with him. I thought there must be some mistake as I did not know anyone on the train. However, along came another conductor whom I had met in the same way on the construction trains. The first one in changing at the divisional point told the second I was on board; and so it was wherever I went, I always met someone whom I had known and who was kind to me, and thereby enlivened otherwise tedious journeys.

During one trip to Winnipeg it was necessary to go a mile into the town of Neepawa as there was no dining-car on the train. A bus met the train, took us up and brought us back. At the table during dinner a gentleman said to me, "Aren't you the little blue girl that lives in the little blue house?" I was furious, though amused, too, but it showed quite well the colour of the house had not been forgotten. This man had happened to be at The Pas before the repainting of the house. He had evidently heard of my aversion to it. I had met him at the time, but forgotten.

We had great fun on one of the trips from The Pas to Eteomami. It took us all day to make the hundred miles at that time, so to amuse themselves on this trip the men were playing cards. I, as usual, was the only woman on board, and after reading half the day was enjoying a good nap when they awakened me to take the hand at the card-table of a doctor who was on board and wanted to

dress up before reaching the Junction. I said, "No, I am not going to play cards." However, they persuaded me. The manager of Revillion's from Cumberland was also of the party, the others I have forgotten, but there was a big party that day, so I "sat in," as they say, and with the usual beginner's luck, won everything in sight. When the doctor saw how things were going he prolonged his ablutions until it was time to leave the train. Whether they got squared up or not I did not stop to hear, but it was a very enlivening trip, judging by the remarks of the other players.

As I was the first woman to go over that portion of the railroad, both before, during, and after construction, one of the engineers came for me to go on the engine when the first one passed over the bridge at The Pas.

In the year 1910, before this same bridge was commenced, the Hon. Geo. P. Graham, the then Minister of Railways and Canals for the Dominion Government, came to The Pas to perform the ceremony of turning the first sod for the now famous Hudson Bay Railway, at which a very amusing incident took place. The Company had the only team of horses and waggon at The Pas, and Mr. and Mrs. Graham were conveyed in it from the train to the place of ceremony, sitting up on two chairs which had been placed in the waggon. We were gathered around to watch the proceedings, Mr. Graham made a short speech, followed by the Indian chief, and just at that time two huskies pushed through to investigate the newly made hole, fearing they might be missing the chance of some food, and, of course, then and there started to fight. It was quite fitting, I thought, that they should be there, showing the great contrast between the transportation of the past and the future. Reporters of various papers

accompanied the party. My friend Jack was on a newspaper in Winnipeg which had not sent a representative. I had not seen nor heard of him for two years. During the day I had a wire from him, relayed by telephone from Etiomami (connection having only just been re-established), brief and to the point, " Send one thousand word description of ceremony to-night without fail," and signed " Jack," which, of course, I did by telephone to Eteomami, thereby getting ahead of all other papers, as the reporters understood that the telephone connection had not been re-established. That was my first appearance in print. I received the large-sized cheque of $5 from the paper and bought a piece of silver for my dressing-table, which I still am using.

Before this time we had a visit from the Hon. Rodmond Roblin and his party. He was Premier of Manitoba, and it was quite an event for a village the size of The Pas to have a Premier of a province visit them. A banquet was tendered him by the citizens. Menus were printed, every item of which was produced in the North and prepared by women of the village. Deerskin covers were made for the menus by " Maskooch," all beautifully decorated with pen and ink sketches of moose, pine trees, etc. Each guest was given one as a souvenir. It was a great success.

A short time before this Walter had several important cases which necessitated the assistant commissioner's presence at The Pas. He brought with him the O.C. from Prince Albert. There being no accommodation in the town, they stayed with us. We only had native food for them, which at that season was fish and then fish again, but I made it as attractive as possible. They remained two days with us, and, on leaving, the assistant commissioner thanked me very much for my kindness and

trouble, and said he really had enjoyed his short stay. Now, the O.C. spoke broken English. He likewise thanked me very effusively for my hospitality. He could not find the right words in English to continue, hesitated, started off again, and then said, "It was wonderful, could not have been better; in fact, just like an hotel." How we all did laugh, but he meant well.

During these years I travelled many hundreds of miles with Walter on his monthly patrols. In summer, by canoe, we were always up by three o'clock, had a cup of tea, and were well away by four. The glory of the sunrises is a memory which will ever be with me. At nine we stopped for breakfast, a much needed stop for the paddlers. This drudgery and actual hard manual labour of those years has made Walter old before his time. When going against the stream he and his Indian dare not stop paddling for one stroke or we would drift back. When they wanted to light their pipes I held an overhanging branch at the bank of the river until they were going well, and then off we would creep again, hugging the shore all the time, or working frantically across midstream to the opposite side to cut off one of the huge bends, some of which were miles around, one called the "Big Bend" being six miles.

We never used a tent when camping unless it was raining, or going to rain, which the Indian could always foretell. We carried a small "A" tent on one trip in early June. We got caught in a sleet storm. We brought the guide into the tent with us, and in getting his bed laid he touched the tent in several places, causing it to leak, with the consequence that we were all lying in water in the morning. The sleet turned to rain and dripped through all night. Oh, the discomfort of trying to get dried during

a rain storm! The next night the field-mice ran over our heads. Now Walter has a special dislike for the harmless little things. He was up and down talking to himself all night. We shot enough ducks or geese during the day for our immediate wants, and sometimes when we camped at night the guide would catch a fish. Well do I remember the first letter I had from home after telling them that we would have to live on ducks and geese for certain months of the year; I had special instructions to be sure and hang the birds for several days before attempting to eat them, and so forth. When I replied that often the bird was shot, plucked, and in the pot, or before the fire to be braized, before it was cold, they thought my hardships were hard indeed.

I thought so, too, where the mosquitoes were concerned. We could not travel one yard without mosquito bars, which were made of white net and worn over our hats to protect our faces in the daytime; and at night for camping we had long ones to cover our bed, tied at the corners to four sticks pushed in the ground, and a loop in the centre tied to a young tree bent over; this kept the centre from sagging.

Oh, the tormenting agony from the irritation of their bites and their buzzing! At every camping place we sat where the smoke would blow on us; this kept the mosquitoes away, and we placed our beds in the same position. When we would get into bed, the guide tucked the netting well and firmly under it, then we lighted a candle and searched all over the bar, catching every mosquito, for if only one, be it ever so small, were left in, there would be no sleep and every nerve on edge by morning. I have watched the big ones push the little ones through! Believe it or not, but it is true! I think

they did it to stretch the mesh that they might then get through themselves. Our blood was very fresh and evidently very tempting in those days.

How different the trips in winter! The distances could be made in half the time; and, while the cold was often intense and often we were far from comfortable, the going was always so rapid—compared with dragging upstream by canoe—although to those used to flying along a highway by motor it would not be thought so, and the spills exciting, as also the mad gallop when the dogs scented game or an old camping ground. We had trained Major to follow behind (which he did so closely that he would often be walking on Walter's snow-shoes) and then at a given word —*meet-sook,* Cree for "dinner-time"—to run ahead of the dogs, which always started them off. Shortly before stopping to boil the kettle or making camp at night we would send him ahead. It freshened the dogs up a bit when they were getting fagged.

I vividly recall a character I met at this time, a man by the name of Smith, I believe, whether his own name or assumed I cannot say. He was a fine upstanding young fellow in his middle twenties, the only Canadian born of Canadian parents whom I had met who could neither read nor write even his own name. He fascinated me; I could not understand such a thing. I used stealthily to watch him all the time, expecting to find him quite different from the rest of us, but he spoke and acted quite nicely. We had met him several times, and then on one of our trips we met him again at a camping place and were going on together, but when the time to start came he could not catch one of his dogs, a very vicious husky and one that had the bad habit of breaking loose. The men started out to round the dog up. The snow was deep and they had

an awful time. Finally, Smith almost got him, but broke through the deep snow and partially fell on the dog, which turned and bit him badly on both cheeks. It was almost impossible to milk the wound, and the blood was freezing on his face, so Walter drew the blood from the wounds with his mouth, and bound Smith's face up with a clean handkerchief, the only white material any of us had, and we hurried on to the next camp. He recovered and only had a few scars.

On another of our trips we travelled with a Roman Catholic priest from Lac du Brochet, whom we were to know very well years hence in a place and under conditions very far removed from Cumberland, in the barren lands of the snow and dark, dark days. On this trip the good man thought he was doing me a kindness by letting me use his charcoal warmer for my cariole. I always used a flat stone heated in the camp fire, wrapped in a sack and put in the end of my robe at my feet, which was always warm and comfortable. I could roll up and sleep for miles in greatest comfort, until I would suddenly have a most rude awakening, being thrown violently out and half buried in the snow. The dogs would be jogging along, Walter running behind and driving them, when all of a sudden the dogs would pick up some scent and be off at a mad gallop before they could be stopped. I was often thrown out, unless I wakened first and could stop them. On this trip the Father insisted upon lending me this wretched warmer, which, when it was going, was all the time smoking and upsetting. I expected to be on fire before the trip was over.

We made a trip in the spring of the year, May 27, 1909. We thought that before the ice melted we just had time to reach Cumberland and come back, with one day there to

rest the dogs. Eight miles out from The Pas we had a nine-mile lake to cross; there was already a good deal of water on the ice and the going was very hard for the dogs. I said I would get out and walk awhile to help them along. Travelling kept getting harder instead of better, the portages being bare of snow, so, of course, I never got in again and walked the rest of the way to Cumberland, forty-five miles by winter trail, with one sleep. Before the return Walter said I must remain behind to wait for open water, which meant three weeks, at least. I had a little weep to myself over that. However, off Walter started, but found the first five miles so good, the weather having been colder, that he returned for me, and off we went full of zest for the trip. Again I rode the first few miles and again I got out to lighten the load, and finished the trip on foot, but it was awful beyond words. For the whole distance I walked in water, at times in making crossings often above my waist; on the portages the dogs could go faster and I would be left miles behind, imagining I heard the padding of feet behind me and eyes looking at me, and with each step my feet slipping on the ice under the water. To this day I fancy I can feel the ache to my legs when I think of the trip. Also, the river for about twenty-five feet from shore was open; the dogs had to swim that free water, and such a time we had in getting the jumper (a sledge with steel runners, about six feet long, used in the spring and autumn when the ground and ice is clear of snow—a toboggan at that time would be of no use) over and trying to keep the food and bedding dry. Walter and the Indian had to wade and half carry it, and, as the depth of water was over my head, they had to carry me.

We camped late that night where two Indian families lived in a little log-house. They were away hunting.

Cold and wet, we went to make fire. No dry wood anywhere to be found, and no one fit to go a mile or so to get some. Walter took an old fence rail, which he paid well for, later. It was just enough to boil the kettle with that night and in the morning. No lights, so I put some bacon fat in a tin lid with a rag in it, and by it we drank our tea and went to bed in wet clothes, with every single stitch on us still soaking, even our "shifts," as my great-grandmother used to call them. A very wet, miserable night. Major was cold and wet, too, and came once or twice to me for warmth, and I was glad to have him lie close beside me on the damp earth floor, the only bit of warmth I had. We started off next morning with less zest, but just as eager to reach home, which we did at six that night. After a hot drink we went to bed and slept without wakening for twelve hours, and again the next night for eleven, but, oh, my poor legs!

On the following night Walter was up in the settlement seeing the chief on business. Major was with him, and I was sitting reading by the table with my back to the window. Suddenly I felt that I was not alone. I kept perfectly still and felt eyes looking at me. I did not know what to do, but could not stand that dreadful feeling. Presently I turned quickly to the window, and there were two black faces pressed to the glass looking at me. We both stared for a minute and then they ran, and I ran out after them. They disappeared into the slough. I did not know them, and so was very frightened. When Walter returned I told him, and he went out to investigate, and found they were two Indians from a distant tribe looking for the missionary. They had been just as frightened as I.

CHAPTER VI

HARD TRIPS AND HOLIDAYS

For six years we lived at The Pas, years in which we were to see many changes and in which I spent many solitary hours. Walter made two trips to Lac du Brochet by dog train, one of them nine hundred miles in fifty-one days, for which he was highly commended by the commissioner in his annual report given in the Government yearly Blue Book on the R.N.W.M.Police. Several of Walter's reports on patrols of an outstanding nature were given verbatim in the Blue Books of different years.

Lac du Brochet, a small trading-post at the extreme north end of Reindeer Lake, is about four hundred miles north-west of The Pas. Reindeer Lake is about one hundred and twenty miles long and full of islands. Half-way across the lake is as far as the barren land caribou would come in their migration south, feeding on the moss on the islands. Walter passed thousands and thousands of them within a hundred yards of him.

While at Lac du Brochet it was reported to Walter that two white men trappers had not been seen or heard of since the previous autumn, so he continued on farther north to find them, which he eventually did. They had been very, very ill and were almost without food and foot-gear, both of which Walter supplied, and so saved their lives. He went also one trip to Fort Churchill, which I was after to know so well, besides all his monthly patrols. He was away over two years altogether.

Just previous to his second trip to Brochet, in January,

WALTER AND MAJOR ON THEIR RETURN FROM A 1400 MILE TRIP TO CHURCHILL.

facing page 76.

1911, it was decided I should go for a visit to my old home in Toronto, the first in nearly five years. Bitter tears I wept on having to go. I would much rather have remained at home. A Danish engineer, who was working at The Pas at that time, was returning to Denmark for a holiday, and so we travelled together to Toronto in December, 1910. We remained over a few days in Winnipeg with friends, and never shall I forget that trip. We were met at the depot by nine engineers, who had been at The Pas at different times, and taken for dinner, my first meal in civilization in five years. When I think of myself as I was then—clothes six years old—I am amazed at the bravery of those men in taking me to dinner at the Royal Alexandra and to the theatre and supper! No courage could be greater! We had made many plans for that dinner, but no one was allowed even to mention fish. We had had to live on it so much for so long. Of the play I have no recollection, but I was fascinated by the women's hair. They were all wearing curls, tacked on anywhere, everywhere, and all over. Never before or since have I seen such visions; women were more or less strange to me anyway. In my interest in them I lost sight altogether of the curiosity I must have been, which was well for my peace of mind.

I spent four unhappy months in my old home. The traffic, the pavement, and the noise all bothered me. I could not sleep properly. I enjoyed, of course, being there and seeing all my old friends, among them Stella, who had been my neighbour since earliest childhood, but I had grown away from them. I was more or less of a heathen, viewed everything so differently, and then I seemed so very far from my own home; could, of course, hear no word of Walter on his long, cold, lonely patrol. Word

was brought down that he had been frozen to death. I did not credit that for a moment, but it was a very anxious time, and I was most glad when it was time to start north again. On the way I stayed over a few days at Port Arthur with the family of the kind Yankee lumberman, then again at Winnipeg, this time not disgracing them with my prehistoric clothes.

Great rejoicing at my homecoming to The Pas and vows of "never again!" Alas! It is well it is hidden what lies ahead of us or some of us would never go on. When I arrived at Eteomami, now called Hudson Bay Junction, I had to stop for a day waiting for The Pas train, as we were never sure on which days it made the trip. Knowing the station agent, I went down in the evening to see him. He called Walter up at The Pas, went out of the office, locking me in, and left me for an hour. It was not a "party" line. Party lines are used extensively in the outlying districts in Canada, which means that a number of subscribers use the one line, each subscriber having a different number of rings to call central, so that when one was talking over the line all could listen to the conversation if they wished. On the train the next day the engineer stopped five miles this side of The Pas to take Walter on. He had walked out to meet us. Could we ever forget such kindnesses?

Walter's cases were many and varied, and he was still alone, but he had a separate guard-room now for prisoners. Often he would have a prisoner in the cell and be called elsewhere, so I would take up the task of "sentry go" outside, and keep the fires burning inside through long hours of the night until his return. The Pas at this time was in the North-West territories and had not yet been taken into a province.

Word came one New Year's Day that a man had been

frozen to death. Walter went out to investigate, and found that he had been frozen while sleeping. He had been pulling a hand sledge across a lake to his cabin when he stopped to rest by sitting on his sledge and had fallen back asleep. Poor man, only a few hundred yards from shore, where he might have built a fire and been comfortable! He was in a half-reclining position and must be thawed before being put in a box to be buried, there being, of course, no coffins. He had no relatives, so that the thawing out had to be done in the guard-room. Again Walter had to leave to interview the Indian chief, as their burial-ground was the only one in the country, and again I was to keep the fires burning. It was almost twilight when I made my first trip to rebuild the fire. I had seen many people frost-bitten and had suffered from it many times myself, and always the frozen part turned black after the frost was out of it. In this instance, I did not think anything at all beforehand, but it must all have been in my mind unconsciously. The guard-room was very small and the man very large. He was lying crossways in the room, in the best position to catch the heat of the very small stove. His arm, which was up over his head, had been bared to absorb the heat. I entered quite bravely, and to reach the stove must step over the man. In doing so I glanced down and stood rooted to the ground, one foot still suspended in the air, for he was all pink and white, and his eyes were open, looking right into mine. Only once in my life have I been more afraid. How long I remained so I cannot now say, it seemed eternity. As he had been frozen while asleep, I naturally supposed his eyes would be closed, and when I found them open I thought him alive. When once the power of movement returned to me it did not take

me long to replenish the fire and fly; but I was much shaken for several hours after.

About this time Walter had to report at Prince Albert to assist in the investigation of a murder in an outlying district. I accompanied him. While there, Walter was to go to Brandon Asylum with two lunatics, a man and a woman. The police matron was unable to go, and, as I wanted the experience, I volunteered, so that I might see some of my old friends in Regina; and such a trip it proved, my first and last in that capacity. The man was very quiet, and for part of the way the woman likewise. She was a very large German. When the conductor made his first rounds he remarked to Walter, knowing he had two lunatics with him, that there did not seem to be much the matter with the young one, taking it for granted that the large woman was the matron. Walter replied, "No, that is my wife." Many a laugh we have had at the conductor's face, the colour and expression! It was a trip not to be forgotten or repeated.

It reminds me of an Indian whose wife had gone insane. We took charge of her, brought her ninety miles by canoe to the railway, and the old husband went with Walter to the asylum as "matron," there being no one else to act. On their return he asked Walter how much he was to be paid. "Paid?" Walter asked. "What for?" "For going with the old woman," he replied. Walter said, "My word, if you don't get away home I'll pay you!" Countless instances occur to me as I write of the desire of Indians to turn an honest penny, though we were to learn later that the Esquimos were equally skilful in that respect.

Another episode recurs to me that we had with a white man who suddenly went insane. He was a Government surveyor doing some work in the Split Lake district, about

three hundred miles north of The Pas. The constable and missionary, Rev. Mr. Fox, at Split Lake, who knew him well, brought him to The Pas. A trip in winter under such conditions is beyond description. He was some time at The Pas, and part of his insanity took the form of spelling every word he uttered; for example, he would say "I want a drink," and then would spell the words "I w-a-n-t a d-r-i-n-k," and so on all day long and far into the night. The boys (our men) commenced to imitate him, no matter what they said, and at meal times, too, until I thought, by the time they took the sick man away, it would be necessary for the whole detachment to be removed to Brandon Asylum under armed guard.

The following incident will illustrate how closely some lumber firms looked after their business. One of the men on the spring drive coming down the Carrot River was drowned. Walter went up to investigate, and finally found the body, and, in settling up the man's affairs so that the balance of his estate could be sent to his family, it was noticed that on deceased's account from the lumber company an item was marked "Sturgeon hooks, 50 cents." In reply to Walter's inquiry as to what this meant, he was told, "Hooks, of course, to drag for the body."

During Walter's absence on the Churchill patrol in the winter of 1912-1913, one of the girls who was visiting from Grand Rapids, a trading-post down the river, and myself thought we would like to see old George Cowan, who was living on Cormorant Lake. She was a very large girl and could not be long on her feet, so could not drive her own dogs. She had an Indian to drive her, while I drove my own dogs, carrying our food and bedding. It was about fifty miles, and we made it easily in the day over the "right-of-way" of the Hudson Bay

Railway, which had been built part way. Being very cold weather, I could not sit on my sledge all the time or I would have frozen to death; I had to keep hopping off, running a mile, and hopping on again, as most drivers do to keep warm. Altogether I ran about twenty miles in the day and was very glad to be able to do so. It will be a great trial to me if ever I become too stout to be active.

We had our visit and rested at the camp a day. At that time we had a detachment there. The constable in charge was going to The Pas with his returns and decided to travel with us. He was afraid all the time something would happen to me, and as soon as it was dusk insisted that I drive my dogs between his train and the Indian's. Neither train was anything like as good as mine, for Walter would not keep a poor dog; he raised them and broke them himself. I never had such an uncomfortable trip. Besides the food and bedding, I was carrying thirty-five frozen white fish, just loose in the cariole. He was determined I should ride in the cariole; put me in and rolled me up in the deerskins, and off we started merrily. I thought it was going to be a splendid trip, and began to doze, but a very rude awakening I soon had. The right-of-way is built up with steep sides to it. The first thing I knew I was over the edge and down, fish all over the place, and myself half buried in snow. I managed to hold the dogs and shouted, but, of course, the Indian, all huddled up, and through the jingling of the bells, heard not a sound. The constable, having rather poor dogs, as they were very young, was nowhere in sight, so there I was left to right things, pick up fish, and do the best I could. I was so angry, but not half as angry as I was to be before the trip was over. The upsets continued, and everything went wrong. I waited for the constable and told him

what I thought. He would not hear of me going on alone, said anything might happen. I replied nothing more could happen than already had, but there were plenty of wolves in that locality, and he would not listen, so off we started again, I rolled up in the cariole. I was soon out of sight, and for seventeen miles I travelled like that, more than half the time sliding down the embankment, covered in snow. We came about midnight to the Saskatchewan, a very deep grade going down to it. The dogs ran madly down. I found the Indian at the bottom with his dogs tangled up, but it was the first place where I could pass him. I did not stop for one word, whipped up the dogs, and was off and was very soon home, the others not arriving for an hour after me.

Kindness is very often misplaced, as in this case, but nothing could have kept me behind had I not had a slight introduction to a bear in the same locality a few months before. We had had a gasolene car sent us for duty along the line (this is a hand-car operated by a little gasolene engine). Something had gone wrong with it a mile or so from the camp, which was off the line in the bush. The men were pushing the car towards the camp, and I volunteered to go up to the camp to get a lantern. I had just got nicely into the bush when I saw what I thought was a man coming towards me. Then I caught sight of gleaming eyes. I called out, and the bear, which it proved to be, dropped on all fours and made off. I called loudly to the men, who came running, but they had left their firearms on the car and so lost Bruno. They called me everything for following it into the bush, but I thought them much worse for leaving their guns.

Startled though I had been, it was not to be compared to a night I went through during Walter's patrol to

Churchill. A sergeant had been sent to take charge during his absence: a man of high honour and splendid ideals. He afterwards passed through and overcame a severe trial.

On this particular night he had had a great deal of difficulty with a Galician whom he had arrested in getting him—a giant of a fellow—into the cell. The Galician had grabbed a piece of wood from the wood box in the guard-room and smashed the lamp to pieces, plunging the place into darkness, and then commenced a terrific struggle between the Galician and the sergeant. A woman living nearby heard the noise and came running to me. I ran, and with me a young fox-terrier, "Tough" by name, who was a born police dog, he had never required any training. No one ever dared lay a hand, even in fun, on any policeman when Tough was around. As we burst into the guard-room the two struggling men were still on the floor, and Tough immediately got into the mix-up, with the result that the Galician soon gave up and was put in the cell. Tough had torn his trousers to ribbons and badly bitten his legs, and although it was pitch dark not once did Tough make a mistake and bite the wrong man. The Galician was taken to a gaol in Manitoba a few days later, where he had to be treated in hospital for the bites, the warden inquiring as to what we had been doing to him.

During the same night some of the Galician's friends threatened to rush the place in an endeavour to get him out. Our cabin was quite close to the guard-room. I was alone, so locked the door, with a lock which when pushed would have broken, and there I sat in the dark, facing the door with a flashlight in one hand and revolver in the other, expecting any moment to be rushed. I could hear the men moving around the cabin. I could not go for anyone, and I was afraid to take time to dress, and so there

I sat, eyes like saucers, expecting the worst, which in this life rarely happens. I laugh now when I think of how powerless I would have been among such men, but I thought then I could do great things, first by blinding them with the light and then firing into the floor.

In connection with shooting, I must tell a good joke against myself, though no one knew it was a joke, and I was very careful to keep it from being considered such. We were all out walking one day along the shore of one of the small lakes, the boys looking for ducks. I had a ·44 rifle in case we saw a coyote. Three geese came over and circled a few times. The boys missed them each time. Finally, I took a flying shot and brought one down, shot through the wing. Great cheers and great praises! On three consecutive days I had this luck, on the second catching a rabbit through the neck on the hop, and on the third a coyote, all with the same rifle. I knew that I could never keep this up, so rested on my laurels after that, only shooting when very sure, as I did not want to lose the reputation I had made. I had practised with a ·22 automatic rifle and could shoot well. A 10 or 12-bore shot-gun was always too heavy for me. The first time I used one it knocked me backward in a canoe. I could scarcely use my arm for the rest of the day, and it was black and blue for days. A 20-bore was just right, and for a long time I used one belonging to dear Mrs. Simpson. The rifle I liked best was a 30·30 carbine.

During this same patrol of Walter's to Churchill one of the men bet me $25 that he would not be back by March 15. He had gone via Grand Rapids, across Lake Winnipeg to Norway House, on to Split Lake, and so to Churchill, a very roundabout way, on account of business. He was to return straight south via Port Nelson and the

right-of-way. The chief engineer of railway construction at that time had a horse and cutter which he used on the right-of-way when visiting his assistant engineers, and he was going seventy miles up the line about the time I thought Walter would be returning, so on March 5 he and I started out by horse and cutter for this point. We stopped the first night at Mile 17 at an engineer's camp, the next night at old Mr. Cowan's, the hunter and free-trader I have mentioned before. The third day we made Lime-Stone Camp at noon; Walter had come in half an hour before us. Oh, what joy at his safe return and the winning of the bet!

It had been a most trying trip for him—an officer to look after who had not the faintest idea of how to travel in the North, but must learn by experience.

Some of these newcomers do their share, as all travellers in that country should; there is no room for slackers. Walter had made the trip of fourteen hundred miles in two months and two days, leaving The Pas on January 6 at 40° below zero and returning to Lime-Stone on March 8 with an average temperature of nearly 30° below zero.

I returned to The Pas with the engineer, arriving at noon on the third day after leaving Lime-Stone, and before Walter. A magistrate at The Pas at that time was anxious to go out and meet the returning patrol, but could not drive dogs. He came to me and asked if I could drive the dogs while sitting in the cariole and he running behind as though he were driving. I replied I would try, and so down the main street we went flying, the dogs very fresh and ready for anything, which, of course, was a fight with the first train of dogs they met. Such a mêlée, snarling, snapping, yelping dogs, fifteen of them, hopelessly tied in knots, traces, tangles, etc. After almost half an hour

getting things straightened out, I said to this man, and I was angry, "Now in with you if you want to go! No more pretending to drive dogs!" for as any dog driver knows, while dogs answer very well to the spoken word, it is almost impossible to expect fresh dogs pulling no load to pass other dogs without having a mix-up of some kind, unless the driver runs out to the side and keeps them going. He never became a dog driver.

On Walter's return from Churchill he told me of a little Esquimo girl, named Maria, he had met there, whom I was to know so well in later years when we lived among the Esquimos.

The Pas was all this time gradually growing in size and population, little shacks going up all over, trappers, fishermen, and miners with their families coming in. We began to have more cases among the white people. One was very sad. Two women, a mother and daughter, had recently come down the river with two men whom they were living with. The mother was a morphine addict, and not long after her arrival her supply gave out. We did not know this until one day they sent for Walter. When he entered her cabin the woman was on a pile of bedding on the floor, just raving. She clutched him and held on with the strength of a crazy person, vowing he was the only one who could save her. He had great difficulty in freeing himself without using force, and then only by promising he would try to obtain some morphine for her. He went to the Indians' doctor, who happened to be just out of the drug, and so they had to send to the Junction for some, for need of which she surely would have died had it not arrived, but she trusted Walter absolutely, and while she was very bad during the three days of waiting for it, she survived, only to die violently a year

later, farther in the bush, when she was again without it.

Another case was a poor, crazy Indian woman. Walter wanted to take her out to the asylum, as she had been quite bad. He had the doctor to examine her, and on his advice left her at her home for another few days, but the very night following she jumped out of a window on to a pile of stones and dashed her brains out.

A stipendiary magistrate was sent in; a most versatile man. He built himself a little two-roomed shack, but had nowhere to get his meals, so I took him in. He was the only man in Canada who had represented Canada in both Rugby and Soccer in England. He had also rowed in the "Argonaut Four." His first case was the trial of a young fellow, I will call him George, who had obtained goods by false pretences. He gave him six months. I don't believe the magistrate ever got over the result of this sentence, for he never gave another prisoner so long for a like offence. But I was the one who suffered most from the long sentence, as I had all the cooking to do, and a constable had to be sent to do guard, etc., so I had another two to cook for. Instead of only myself and Walter, I had five—our two selves, the magistrate, the constable, and George. We had two more prisoners, and although this was only for three weeks, it made our number seven, and they had to eat in my kitchen. A great assortment they were, the lad George doing six months, an Indian doing three weeks, and an educated white man, much the worst of the lot, being an abuser of animals, doing three. George had been with us about two months when the other two joined us. The morning after they had gone, George said to me, "We don't eat nearly so much bread, do we, Mrs. Munday, now that we are alone?" He thought he was quite one of the family.

Another prisoner we had, a huge Swede, was watching me prepare dinner one day. As our food was so simple I always endeavoured to make it as attractive as possible. On this particular night I had blancmange. I had it made in a shape, which I turned out and was decorating it with jam, etc. Suddenly he said to me in his broken English, "What hotel you bane work in before you bane married?" I assured him I never had worked in an hotel, and asked why he asked me that, "You bane such a wonderful cook," he replied, "I am sure you bane work in hotel." This occurred when Florence from Toronto was visiting me. She heard the conversation from the other room and told it about me for many a year.

Then still another was added to my growing family, a new officer just appointed, and although he did not know anything of Northern life, he did try to adapt himself to it. He remained six weeks with us, and I would like to say *en passant,* that among the dozens and dozens of men who have been with us at one time and another there never was one who was more kind and considerate to me, good company (very much taken with "Maskooch," who was with me again for a little while), a gentleman in every sense of the word. I look back with great pleasure to his short sojourn with us.

In 1913 tributes to the detachment were paid by railway officials, which were very pleasing, showing how the work had been appreciated. One from Vice-President Boyd, one from Assistant Chief Engineer Garrow, also one from Mr. McMillan, the chief sub-contractor, in which the members of the detachment were complimented for the very efficient manner in which they policed the Hudson Bay line.

"I have never had a gang of men on any contract where

there was less friction and less whisky on the work than on this job, and I realise it is to the members of the detachment that we owe this state of affairs," so wrote Mr. McMillan, who added that he hoped that they would all be together at the end of steel (which means when the railway was completed to Hudson Bay).

One evening in May of 1912 we were sitting alone at dinner, no prisoners doing time, and the other members of the detachment out hunting. I should say that no more than half a dozen times during these years had we tasted fresh fruit, except on our trips to Prince Albert and my one trip home. On this particular night we had cherry jam tart for dessert. I found a stone, and as I laid it on the side of my plate I suddenly had visions of the outside orchards, full of fruit, flowers everywhere, and of all the things that make life beautiful. I said to Walter, "Well, when we do make up our minds to go home to England, we must go in the summer when the fruit is ripe and the flowers in bloom, so that we may have enough of all those things for just once." Walter replied, "Well, what are we waiting for?" I said, "I don't know." "Let's go," said Walter.

Then and there he wrote an application for three months' furlough, which was granted, and off we started for what proved to be the most glorious trip this life has so far afforded us. It was Walter's first holiday in nine years. We visited England, Scotland, and France, but only had two months over there, the going and coming taking so long. We were seventeen days on the return trip; a long time to spend travelling.

England, the beautiful, where I hope to end my days! What a joy to visit all the historical old places! The people there seemed so surprised that I should know so

many of the places by name. Every day and all day I was going, from early morning until late at night, while all Walter wanted to do was to attend all the theatres, music-halls, and concerts, then spend the following day at the piano, playing all that he had heard the previous night. His passion in life is music. I have never met anyone in my life so fond of it, and for nine years he had been literally famished for it, so he intended to have enough to last him until his next trip. Why he married me has been a puzzle all my life. I do not know "The Last Rose of Summer" from "The Dead March," and cannot sing or whistle two notes correctly. Like many other tourists, I wanted to see the whole of England and the Continent in two months, but he would not go anywhere. We could not get him up from the piano for his meals even.

Finally, I said, "Well, I am going to Scotland, with company or alone, it does not matter to me," and I packed my bag. Very grudgingly he consented to go with me, and a wonderful time we had. When we reached Loch Lomond he wanted to get off the boat and stay a week in the Trossachs, and then I had the same difficulty with him when I wanted to go to France. However, he accompanied me and was very good. We were very interested in hearing in Paris "The Merry Widow." That, of course, had been popular some time before while we were still in the North, and we had never heard it, neither had I seen a "Merry Widow" hat. It was interesting to hear the musical comedy in its own setting. Oh, it was a wonderful trip, glorious Versailles and all it meant! The time flew all too quickly. Some day we hope to go again, and perhaps next time we shall fly and so avoid the Channel crossing.

Upon our return to The Pas we had to move, the owner requiring our house for his own use for the winter. Our

new home was quite the smallest house imaginable. It had four rooms, the whole four not being as large as one ordinary one should be. The bedroom held the bed, nothing else, so I made a dressing-room of the room next to it, and then there was a dining-room and a kitchen. The latter held a stove, table, and shelves. I did not require to move in any direction to reach any article; but, oh, the heat in that place! Our detachment had grown, there were now six of ourselves and one or two constables from outposts who were constantly coming in, and I cooked for them all. It was a struggle to get enough food cooked and variety in the menu, but they were a happy, agreeable lot.

The youngest member, whom I shall call "Alecsen," was absolutely incorrigible, irresponsible, and irresistible, never at any time under any circumstances could he do anything right, and yet he had more of a chance than any other member of the detachment. He had intended to go into the Church in England; in fact, put in two years in training for ordination, but changed his mind and came out to the force. He was quite an artist, could sketch anything, and should have studied art, but would apply himself to nothing. He was more like one of Gil Blas' characters than anyone I ever met or heard of. He drew a large eye, under which he printed "Sees All, Knows All," and placed it under Walter's photograph. It was utterly impossible to deceive Walter about anything, as Alecsen found every day of his life.

On one occasion when all members were away but Alecsen, a woman came and reported to him that she was sure her husband had met with an accident, as he was two weeks overdue. She told Alecsen where his camp was. He came to me and asked me to go with him. All the dogs

were away, and he did not know the country at all, so I made up a lunch. The return trip would be only fifteen miles. I knew we could make that in the day, and off we started. He wasn't much of a walker, and it was a little further than I had expected, so it was well on into the afternoon when we were still a couple of miles from the camp. I suggested lunch to freshen us up, and told Alecsen to light a fire. Well, I had never seen such an attempt at fire making. I opened and set the lunch, but still no fire, and actually he could not get it to go at all, so I said to him, "Well, Alecsen, if you can't light a fire, I won't, I can stand the cold as well as you can." (I should say this was in the middle of December.) So we ate a cold lunch, myself very much annoyed, Alecsen all smiles and apologies. There was no resisting him.

After half an hour we proceeded, and finally came to the camp and found no one there. Alecsen vows to this day that I was first into the tent so that I might take a photograph of the frozen man, but, of course, he was wrong. He never tells the truth if a fib sounds more picturesque. He was all for camping for the night to see if the man returned. I suggested that he should feel the ashes of the old fire and see if they were at all warm. At the same time I examined the water-hole and found it had been cut through that day, and the ashes were a bit warm, so I knew the man was only out at his trap-line, which proved to be the case, and just as we were about to start on our homeward trek he returned and was able to give us a letter to his wife, and so all were satisfied. We reached home tired but satisfied, too, and a good warm dinner we had, if it was late.

One could never be angry with Alecsen, he was the best company in the world, and worth his pay in the

force for the good cheer he radiated all about him. I afterwards visited his very charming family in England, and hope to do so again. When the Great War broke out he deserted to go over, as his younger brother had joined up. No one was allowed to purchase his discharge from the force at this time, but Alecsen never had a single cent to his name, so could not have done so anyway. He joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force and reached Valcartier, Quebec. Things were not moving fast enough; he deserted again and got over as a steward and joined as a private, but still things were too slow. His father got him a commission, and then he wrote me saying this would be the last I would hear of him until he was either dead or had won the V.C. The next I heard he had won the M.C. He wrote me of his having lunch at Windsor with several others, and of their being decorated by the King, and how "jolly decent the King had been to him."

I did not hear again until one day some years after, when we were at Niagara Falls, a wire came from Halifax, Nova Scotia, asking for enough money to take him to Ottawa. The commissioner had pardoned him and he was going to rejoin as a private after seven years overseas as an officer. He hadn't a cent to his name. Such a boy, laughing his way through life, never a care nor a worry, wonderful!

Constantly during our years at The Pas surveyors and engineers were passing back and forth investigating conditions for the Hudson's Bay Railway and laying base lines, etc. Our main conversation for many, many moons was the terminus of the railroad, which was to be such a help to the West. Fort Churchill being a natural harbour, that, of course, was considered the logical terminus, and,

MYSELF IN INDIAN CLOTHES.

NOON MEAL WITH OUR INDIAN GUIDES.

facing page 94.

honestly, I do not believe at that time that any engineer considered any other place. Our amazement was great indeed when Nelson was chosen. Ours were only very lay minds indeed, but I recall many, many conversations with engineers at that time. I also recall one promise made to " Maskooch " and myself that as soon as the road was finished we should be given a pass. I intend yet to remind the maker of it of that promise.

About this time two men, Captain Ault and Mr. Stewart, from the Carnegie Institute in the United States, came up on their way to the magnetic Pole in connection with the compass; investigations which take place every fifty years, I am told. They were most interesting, and remained a few days with us, and again upon their return South, when we all made the trip out to Hudson Bay Junction together by hand-car. They were two of the " ships which pass in the night " whom we often wished we might have seen again. Captain Ault met a very sad fate in 1929. He was master of the Carnegie Institution's scientific yacht *Carnegie,* which blew up and burned in Apia Harbour, Samoa. He was killed and several of his crew were seriously injured.

I went hunting a great deal with the boys and trapping with an Indian. I secured enough rabbits for a rabbit-skin robe, dried and braided in the Indian manner. These robes are remarkably light and so warm. There is nothing really to compare with them for travelling. Different constables coming and going, all of them stand out vividly in my memory for characteristics and habits. They were all good to me always, helping me in whatever way was possible, carrying water and wood and washing dishes. That winter of 1912-1913 was a hard, hard winter, roasting in the kitchen and freezing at night. They all

did their best to lighten it for me. Alas! some have gone to the Great Beyond, but they live ever in my memory for their kindnesses.

In the spring we decided that we must have another house and, as there were none to be had, we built a five-roomed cottage. "Dad" had given up her home in Toronto the year before and was in Ottawa. She sent me some of her furniture, my great-grandfather's. Our house was small, but the rooms large, and we had a real home at last. We had a piano, the first in the district, and the week we were settled we had a surprise party, thirty friends arrived one night. A delightful party it was, and a surprise all round, for they had not known that we had a piano, so rugs and furniture were moved and dancing was carried on far into the night.

But, alas! six months of our new home were all we were to enjoy. The previous winter had evidently been too hard on me, I was suffering every day and all day more and more with indigestion. Walter decided I should return to England to the specialists there, which I finally did in December. It was on this trip that the doctors advised two months at a nursing home for rest and "investigation." Very reluctantly I consented, and remained two weeks. The inaction, if nothing else, would have driven me mad. It happened that on the last day of the two weeks one of the boys from home came to see me. After a short visit I told him to wait downstairs for me. I got up and dressed and out we went, first to the British Museum, then for tea at home. I never returned to the nursing home. I remained six months in England, gained fifteen pounds, and was never better.

During this trip an old friend, a free-trader from Moose Lake, seventy miles from The Pas, who was also visiting

his home in England after an absence of twenty years, came to call on me. We were condoling with one another about the cold in England, to the great wonderment of Walter's family; they could not understand our feeling cold there after the sub-zero weather in Canada.

It was on this second trip to London that I had such an exciting time at a fancy dress ball given at Windsor Town Hall. I had been invited, but had no intention whatever of attending until I was persuaded to go and wear my Indian costume, which I had taken over to show the family. I was properly painted, and everyone thought I was a real Indian. I never had such a time in my life. They were all most interested in my clothes and the beautiful bead work of the Indians.

I was anxious to find my father's old home. He had sold it before going to Canada, he and my mother were both only children. I had no aunts, uncles, or cousins to find, just the old home, which I would so like to have gone through.

The family were much interested in my desire to see the Oxford and Cambridge boat race. They wanted to know what I knew about that, and so forth, and tried to put me off altogether. I told them that if it were known in Canada that I had been in England at that time and had not attended it I would not be allowed to land when I returned. They were much amused.

CHAPTER VII

COUTTS—ROUGH TIMES ON THE BORDER

I lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

Just before I returned, Walter thought perhaps the life and climate at The Pas were too severe for me. We had spent eight winters in the North, so he asked for a transfer to Southern Alberta, the worst possible place in the world he could ever have asked for as far as any relief from his strenuous duties or change of climate was concerned. He was stationed first at Medicine Lodge, out of Medicine Hat, in a beautiful wooded country, but was only there a few week, then moved to Empress, which was a new village. The railway was not in.

We drove from Medicine Hat two hundred miles through what seemed to me then the most desolate, rattlesnake, poverty-stricken country one could imagine. Our first camp was with a half-breed and his family. Such dirt I never saw among the Indians as in that shack, and the children were worse. I could hardly eat. We had salt pork and beans, and for dessert sour cream with sugar on it. I was going out after our meal to get a breath of air. It was pitch dark, and just as we got nicely started a voice called, "Be careful of the rattlesnakes, they are all over; you had better not go far!" Our bed that night was on the floor of one of the rooms. The corporal lay in one corner of the floor, which was full of knot holes. I had visions of the snakes wriggling up through the holes and getting into the beds. I did not sleep very much. Our next camp, with a family from the States, was a sod-

house and barn. Our meal was bacon and what we took to be beans, but found to be raisins. Their fuel was manure, and the water had to be hauled for miles. Such misery! The father called his children dear little "B." The first time I had ever heard that expression used endearingly. I was not much impressed with it as a term of affection. Our last camp, with prosperous farmers, was fifteen miles from Empress, a good house, delicious meals, and a comfortable bed.

Empress itself at that time was hopeless. It is, of course, a changed place to-day. Walter had been there a week and refused to stay, the only time during his service in the force that he ever questioned any order. There was a two-storey building used as an hotel. We had a corner room in the hall. The cracks were so wide between the rooms that Walter had to hold a blanket up while I dressed. The wash-room was a corner of the dining-room, and there were snakes everywhere. As I stepped outside the door one scurried under the steps. I was glad indeed that they were not aggressive. We had taken a corporal in to relieve Walter. Next morning we started South again and left him to his fate.

The beds of alkali we passed on this trip were sights I never forget, looking in some lights so like beautiful lakes. I thought how the early settlers must have been deceived in their search for water. It was cruel that this part of the country was ever opened to homesteaders. We remained at Medicine Hat two weeks and then were transferred to Coutts, a sub-district on the Montana boundary.

We arrived there in the middle of June, 1914, less than two months before war was declared. I had come straight from England, met Walter at Hudson Bay Junction, packed our goods at The Pas, proceeded to Medicine Hat,

taken the Empress trip, and here we were in what I felt must be the hottest, most barren section in Western Canada. There was not a tree, a flower, nor a bit of shade anywhere in sight; and, oh, that dazzling sun ever beating down without respite! The prairie reflected it like a mirror. For six weeks we had not a drop of rain. Walter and Tough did not mind it, Major and I nearly died. I sent for old Raw-Hide Jack, a sheep-shearer, to come and shear Major, and we spent most of our time either in the cellar or a cold bath. Walter revelled in it. He never minded the most intense cold, and here he was enjoying the awful heat. At nine in the morning in the shade it was 98°, and during the day our thermometer reached 116°. My recently gained fifteen pounds went flying. I was like a greyhound. The men had to do most of their patrolling at night.

Twenty-seven miles east of us were the Sweet Grass Hills. I believe they saved my sanity that first summer, the light on them was ever changing. We could not see the trees nor green, but it was a rise in the awful monotony, and the ever-changing colour was the only relief we had. Oh, the wind, the fiendish wind! I had never experienced anything like it. I could not stand against it and often could not get in the door. I would have to go around to another.

We had four rooms and an office, fair sized, and gave the entire upper floor to the men. We had two constables at first, increased during the war to five, with five detachments and twenty-two men altogether. These five detachments were distributed along the international boundary line between Alberta and Montana for a distance of one hundred and twenty-five miles, the men constantly coming day and night with prisoners and special dispatches; a

most exciting time. The cell was off my dining-room, and a most interesting lot we had there from time to time, Germans, Austrians, etc., of all ranks, from officers of the army and navy to labourers of all classes, trying to get home through the States. We kept them until a train could take them North to the internment camp. Walter arrested one German just by the detachment. He had no idea where he was. He was sent up to the camp, and a few months later escaped with five others. Word was sent through, and all members were out at once scouring the country. I was reading in my sitting-room, which was across the hall from the office. I heard the door open and someone go into the office. People were always coming and going, I never looked up. Presently the immigration officer appeared in the doorway and asked me to come into the office. He said, "Do you know this man?" "Why, yes," I replied, "it is H——" calling him by name. He said, "I thought I could not be mistaken," and between us we clapped the man into the cells, and there he was all safe and sound when the men returned at all hours of the night, completely tired out, but also with the other escaped prisoners.

I would like to say here that I am sure the people of Canada have no idea of the work performed by the members of border detachments during the war. They patrolled that line day and night and were often out twenty-three hours out of twenty-four, and besides they were marked men. How many of them escaped I don't know. One man rode eighty miles in twelve hours, changing horses at each post; he had special dispatches and nothing stopped him. All hours of the day and night they were moving, bringing in as many as twelve Germans in one day. If this were on a Saturday after train time we had

to keep them until Monday afternoon. Superintendent Pennefather, our O.C. at that time, wrote in his annual report, which appeared in the Blue Book for 1915:

"I cannot speak too highly of the way in which Sergeant Munday performs his duties in the district of which he is in charge. He is efficient, energetic, reliable. I consider the line detachments to be the most important in the district."

We had several lunatics from among the homesteaders, and several drug addicts attempting to enter Canada. The latter are, without exception, the most deplorable of human beings, deserving of all help and pity. One, Kelly, was worse than a raving lunatic, climbing up the bars screaming and yelling for a dose. We sent for the doctor from over the line, who gave him a small portion and almost instantly he was normal. We had him in the kitchen for a little while. He had been in some gambling place in the South and showed me how to stack cards wonderfully. He asked me what cards I wanted. I replied "four aces." With a few twists of his hands he dealt out four hands. I had the four aces. He was finally deported, but the week-end he spent with us is one of the horrors of my memory.

In September, enter Ethel, laughingly called "The Idol of the Mounties." She came for a month and remained a year. The year of her life, I would say. Girls were scarce, and she certainly was given a good time by the boys. She had never been West before, and wanted all the thrills it could offer. With the exception of two white women on our side, our only neighbours were the women of the little village across the border in Montana. Our pasture fence ended on the line. The station was built half on one side and half on the other, with the flag of

each country flying on either end. The women from over there all called upon me—wives of hotel men, of store-keepers, of cattle men, and also the wife of one banker and of a banker in the gambling saloon. We often sat on our verandah and watched the cowboys tearing madly forth and back through the town, shooting as they went. There was no police authority within forty miles of the village. They had a free time of it. On one of my first trips over there as I was passing by a saloon—there were four of them, open night and day—the door burst open, a couple of dozen drunken, fighting, yelling men rushed out after one man, whom they soon got down and started to kick. I was after them like a flash, little realizing what kind of men I was dealing with. To me it was an awful sight to see a man kicked when he was down. Fortunately, one of our men happened to see me and came flying and took me out of it. I was never allowed to go over the line alone again.

One of the men came home with a most amusing tale one day. He had been talking to Johnny, one of the bar tenders over there. He remarked to our man, "That Mrs. Munday is the only lady in the district." Our man disputed that, saying he thought there were several very nice ladies, but Johnny said, "No, I have lived here ten years, I know every woman and child in the country, and Mrs. Munday is the only one who ever speaks to me on the street." It had not cost me anything, for I really liked the man, and I had won a friend who did many a good turn for me.

There were monthly dances to which we were always invited, but until Ethel came we had never attended. Ethel, of course, was all for going. Walter would not, so the boys took us. "I want to dance with the toughest

man in the room," was her first remark. I replied it would be either Dr. So-and-So, or J—— The latter, having done two years in the penitentiary, was then running for Congress, " But don't you dare dance with either," I said. I did not know them. I got up to dance, and presently there on the floor she was with the doctor, though I think perhaps the joke was against me after all, as the first person I was introduced to, and found myself dancing with, was a man who had three lives, or, rather, deaths, to his credit, or discredit; all in " self-defence," of course.

We got to know these people very well in the years we were there. They were kind to me at all times, and down the line there were wealthy ranchers—Websters, Pritchards, Tabors, and Taylors. They all had extensive leases and comfortable homes. Many and many a happy visit I have had with them. The Tabors lived across the river from our Pendant d'Oreille detachment, and their home was open at all times to our boys. On some of these trips we were in time for the " round-up "—an exciting experience to see so many wild cattle and ride among them. Also the branding season was interesting, and the dipping season, all so different, but all more or less thrilling, and they were usually followed by dances, which I might say were almost as thrilling. My kind friends could never do enough for me.

Walter inspected his detachments once a month. The first years he rode, never missing a month. The first detachment, Writing-on-Stone, so named from drawings made by the Indians in the early days, was twenty miles east; Pendant d'Oreille, meaning " hanging by the ears," an old torture ground of the Indians, was fifty-six; and Wild Horse was a hundred and ten. He made the round trip in five days, changing horses at each post.

Another detachment was later established between the two latter. Wild Horse was where we had been asked to go in the first year after our marriage, but where the men had been saved from my then lack of knowledge of cooking.

At Pendant d'Oreille I received the second great fright of my life. I have been so ashamed of it always. The boys all slept in the big main mess-room. I was put in the office. It adjoined the mess-room, but had no entrance through, having only a separate entrance. The building was very old—one of the original buildings—and was infested with mice. I never have been the least bit afraid of mice or rats, could handle them without repugnance, neither am I afraid of snakes when I know where they are. The man in charge wanted to get rid of the mice, so he left at large in the house two rattlesnakes which had got in, one in the cellar, which was safe there. It could not get into the house, and always disappeared when a noise or light was shown going down to the cellar; the other was up in the little garret. We could hear it slithering around up there, and up and down the space in the walls, with the occasional squeak of a mouse.

When I was shown into my room, there, hanging beside the bed, was the skin of a rattler stuffed with sand, and with every step I took on the old floor it swayed. Oh, such a time I had after I was in bed with the light out! I could hear the live snake, and with my every move the stuffed one scraped back and forth, until finally I did not know which was which. It was just a case of letting my imagination get the better of me. I fancied I felt the live one on the bed and all over, until finally I could stand it no longer, and I was so ashamed, so terribly ashamed to have to admit to the boys I was afraid, but at last I had

to go to them, and it was with a very meek voice I told them that I was afraid to sleep alone. So they put a bed on the floor in my room for Walter, and then the fun began, for Walter greatly dislikes mice. However, at last all was arranged to suit all parties. I slept on the floor and Walter in the bed, and so nearing daybreak I got off to sleep. Everything is so much worse at night, but I am ashamed yet when I think of having to admit my fear of something that would fly from me rather than at me, unless first attacked.

And now I had to learn to cook all over again. We had milk and eggs and fresh meat. It took me a great time to learn to use the milk and eggs. To this day we use evaporated milk for coffee, from choice. We became so accustomed to it, and find it neither weakens nor cools the coffee, as the fresh cream does. I made butter; oh, such butter! Never before or since, of course, have I tasted such. We had a Jersey cow, a black pig and a white pig, a dozen hens and one rooster—more of him anon—four turkeys. In the pasture a lamb or two, given us always by the sheep men passing through. They had to quarantine the sheep for thirty days just where we were. One spring there were eighteen thousand there at one time; such a sight, the dear, long-legged lambs frisking about! How I loved the animals. I spent most of my day in the stables and yards. We had a cat, a large, wild, yellow cat, with a very distinct "M" in the middle of its forehead, and so we called him "Mike of the Mounted Police." It took me two weeks to tame him. I kept him in the granary and had to handle him with gloves, but he developed into a great pet. His favourite position was on Walter's shoulder as Walter sat at his desk. Quite a task I had in reconciling Major and Tough to having him

around the house. They had always killed everything they saw. It was a fearful trial to them, but they were obedient first, last, and always. At my one word "No," they would stop and stand, quivering all over, while Mike went placidly about his business. Finally, they became the very best of friends, slept and ate and stalked mice and gophers together.

The great trouble was that my domestic animals were such pets I could never eat them. They all followed me everywhere. Our daily train passed just below the house. I often took a letter down to mail. On one occasion as I came I saw everyone laughing very heartily at something. At last I looked back. Major and Tough were with me, the cow, pigs and chickens just behind, with Mike bringing up the rear. I had left the gate open. For our first Christmas dinner a number of the detachment boys came in and we had our turkeys, but I could not touch them. They and the chickens would follow me into the kitchen, as the cow would have done also if she had been able to get through the door. The rooster came and called me at the door each morning. How *could* I eat them? I kept the rooster until we left Coutts and then pensioned him off, a rancher kindly taking him and promising faithfully never to kill him. This caused great merriment along the line, but to me he was a friend in that country of few people.

We had a very interesting visit during this time from the late Charles Mair, who told us some of his early experiences. He was, according to the President of the Canadian Authors' Association, in his address in July of 1927, "Father of Canadian Literature." In the same month after this tribute the venerable poet passed away at the great age of eighty-nine years.

The wind continued to be my greatest trial. Its never ceasing roar I thought at times would drive me mad. There was no relief from it anywhere; everything in the whole house seemed to rattle and bang, and it sounded just like a storm at the theatre. I plugged and fastened everything I could find loose, but still it continued. Some nights, when I so longed for sleep, I would wrap my head up in a quilt and lie under the bed, and then I nearly smothered. It was a dreadful summer. In six weeks we had only two calm days. In after years in the far North I was to experience again wind that was so much worse that in comparison this was a summer breeze. But now I longed every day for the cool and calm of the North, and to be there again would gladly have put up with the three months of mosquitoes.

We rode every day during the autumn and winter, there being nothing else at all to do. One patrol which was made daily was a circle of sixteen miles, covering the only points in the vicinity where the river could be crossed, and where those desirous of entering the States could do so. On one of these patrols, one day when two of us were alone, we met a man walking south along the track. I remained, as usual, off to the side while the constable went off to investigate. I saw him speak to the fellow, and then instead of the man putting his hands up, as I expected, he put them into his pockets. My heart missed a beat and I expected to hear a shot. Then I saw the constable's hands go up and I was frightened, but it turned out to be a German who could not speak English and did not know what the constable was telling him to do, so the constable showed him and then searched him, and off to the barracks we marched him. These little events were our only excitement.

During these first years after we had left the Pas, Walter received several offers to return there to work for the town, and finally the people very kindly got up a petition, signed by the Anglican dean in charge of the district, the Roman Catholic bishop, and all the leading merchants, to obtain a commission for Walter, and, while it failed, we very greatly appreciated their efforts and kindly thoughts. It was now that we began to waken up to the fact that we were being entirely overlooked and forgotten, and that no thought was given to the work and isolation in which we had lived. It was a very sad awakening; things of that kind leave their mark.

For the first three years of the war Walter inspected the line detachments monthly and kept everything going in perfect order. These were admittedly the most important of the detachments during these years, and the commissioner had asked the men of the force to stand by him, and told them that they would all be going overseas together presently.

We took a trip to California for three months during the winter of 1916, Walter's second holiday in thirteen years, and while there he received orders to report at Regina for an officer's training class for overseas. While he attended this class I remained in California, taking up Red Cross nursing, as I hoped to go overseas. Also, at the same time, Ethel joined me there. We worked for the Canadian Club and the British Red Cross. Frequently I was in charge of the rooms, and it was my privilege so to be when we entertained Cyril Maude. He was playing "Grumpy." He spoke and also recited many of Robert Service's poems. It was a great treat. The people we met, all Canadians and English, were most kind to us, opening their homes to us and making our stay most

pleasant. We visited the moving picture places, saw many of the film stars in person, saw the pictures in the making, and met one or two of the stars, who kindly posed for me. We passed well in our classes, both of us to make good use of our training later on.

It was during our holiday trip to California that Major, my beloved and ever faithful companion and friend during twelve years, met a very sad fate. He had been left behind at Coutts, and for no reason at all was poisoned. It saddened us so much and was so cruel and unjust.

Walter being still in Regina and expecting at any time to go to Egypt, I returned from California and spent a month with him there. Arrangements had not yet been made for the force to go to Egypt, and so we returned to Lethbridge for three months, where Walter was sergeant-major; a very different Lethbridge from the one I had first known.

At the end of three months we returned to Coutts, and a very busy few months I put in then, collecting for the Victory Bonds, Red and Blue Cross work, etc. With the exception of a trip I made to the top of Mount Lowe in California, I had not been on a horse for a year. During my first day I rode twenty-five miles and collected several thousand dollars, over thirty thousand before I was finished. The Blue Cross interested me very much and I made many collections for it.

And now comes my saddest time in the force. The provinces had formed their own police, our work was practically at a standstill. Walter was very discouraged. At least half a dozen times a day farmers came to him with all manner of complaints, begging him to assist them. His hands were tied, the provincial police were only forming and could do nothing. It was a bad time

for the public. Walter had an offer to go into business in a small town up the line, a good business it had been. We talked it over, I was very much against it, knowing he could never be satisfied out of the force. He begged me not to let sentiment stand in the way. However, he gave up the idea until our next visit there, when the bank manager persuaded him to go into it. It was a sinking ship, but, even so, something might have been saved out of it had not a disastrous fire visited the town, and in an hour Walter's savings were wiped out. He had been less than three months in business, but long enough to realize that a business life would never suit him. They had appointed him police magistrate and bailiff for the district and several offices, and he was then asked if he would like a commission in the provincial police, but, of course, would never accept that after having served so long in the dear old force.

In the summer he re-enlisted. During this time I was busy every minute with Red Cross work and the raising of funds. There never had been a branch in the small town, and very little sympathy was felt for the British. The settlement was nearly all Germans and people from the States. I was cordially disliked for my endeavour to help, and most of those who sewed for me (not all, I am thankful to say) did it as though they were conferring a favour upon me personally. It was a most difficult time and not to be repeated.

Walter had gone to Regina. I followed him, having to leave behind my beloved Tough and now Cinders, a Maltese who had been added to the family. I have spoken of Major's loss during our California trip, a faithful friend wantonly destroyed, but never forgotten. I read these words somewhere. How true they are and how exactly

they express my feelings! I regret not having the name of the author:

"I am sorry for any human being who doesn't love dogs. He or she misses one of the purest pleasures on earth, for there is no other love that is so faithful, so unselfish, that asks so little and gives so much as a dog's. Anyone who has not had a dog who called him master and who looked up to him as we look up to God, anyone who has not had a dog nuzzle its head into his shoulder or lay its head upon his knees and look up into his face with eyes of deathless devotion, anyone who has not heard a dog's yelp of joy at his return of an evening, is poor indeed. He or she has missed something fine and beautiful and wonderful out of life.

"But even if you are a dog hater, try to get his point of view on the subject and realize that to many men a dog is an absolute requisite of happiness. They simply can't exist without one. Home is no home without the pattering of little paws running to meet them and the wriggling of a little body that leaps all over them the minute they open the door. They are like the Scotchman who said that he felt as if he were undressed when he took a walk if he didn't have his dog at his heels."

CHAPTER VIII

REGINA—THE "FLUE" EPIDEMIC

One day at a time! That's all it can be;
No faster than that is the hardest fate,
And days have their limits, however; we
Begin them too early, and stretch them too late.

One day at a time! But a single day,
Whatever its load, whatever its length,
And there's a bit of precious scripture to say
That, according to each, shall be our strength.

H. H. JACKSON.

WALTER had to undergo an operation before they would accept him in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Proper care was not shown, slight infection set in, and he had a difficult time, and finally was sent West for a short time to recuperate. We went to Banff, spending a delightful week there, then back to Regina, from where Walter left for overseas, and then began for me the hardest work of my life.

Walter entrained for overseas one dull, drizzling night at dusk. The train was so long in starting, owing to the loading of the horses, that by the time it did go I was the only one left of the crowd of people who had been there; not a soul in sight anywhere. For the last hour we had been together Walter kept saying to me, over and over and over again, "Now you will be all right, won't you?" "Now you will be all right, won't you?" until I was nearly distracted, as I had to answer always with a smiling face that of course I would be all right. Finally, the train pulled slowly out, leaving me quite alone, still smiling

and waving, and when it had disappeared, oh, the intolerable ache in my heart! I stood between two freight cars crying until I could compose myself enough to walk along the street, and I was only one of thousands suffering in the same way. Why?

I had had a nursing position offered me overseas and was ready to go, when the awful influenza broke out. I volunteered for service at the military hospital at Regina and was accepted. I worked all day and every day and then on night duty, and was finally transferred to the isolation hospital for a month and then back. Nurses were hardly obtainable at all. We had one trained nursing sister matron for eighty patients, the rest of us were V.A.D.s. I had taken a further nursing course then, and knowing only one family in the city at that time, I never wanted time off. The whole experience was a ghastly nightmare; the sufferings of the poor helpless fellows were heartbreaking. Deaths followed one another so quickly. The doctors were helpless, too, and had so many cases that no time could be spared for individual patients. We all wore masks and sterilized coats, but the greatest care could not prevent contagion. Gradually one after the other the nurses were stricken, some much more lightly than the others, but I was the only nurse of the whole staff who was never off duty.

At the end of five months and when I was just about to sign on for another term, the Provincial Government, owing to the member for Cumberland knowing I had lived at Cumberland House, asked me to go up there and do what I could for the Indians. They were dying in great numbers through lack of attention, it being impossible to find doctors or nurses who could go. I, knowing the country and the Indians so well, felt it my duty to

go. I realized fully what I was going to and knew I could never do the work, which meant travelling about from case to case, alone. I asked that I should be given an assistant. The authorities replied that they knew of absolutely not a soul, but if I could find someone I could take her. I then remembered one of the V.A.D.s who had lately left the hospital, her people considering $25 a month not sufficient for the hard work and long hours which we were working. I went to her with the proposition, and she very gladly accepted, and with three days' notice we started off by train back to The Pas. The Red Cross of both Regina and Prince Albert sent me a box of supplies, which were to prove of great assistance.

At The Pas I had to make arrangements for dog teams to take us the balance of the distance. We remained over one day to accomplish this and to get the food box ready and bannocks baked. The Hudson's Bay Company loaned us each a deerskin coat and the Armstrong Trading Company each a robe. All did what they could to assist me. It was such a pleasure to meet old friends, especially the Jacobsens. "J. P.," as he was always called, was manager of the Finger Lumber Company. There are only two other men in the world as fine as he. At night, in the hotel waiting-room, there kept coming in first one and then another whom I had met years ago, even Captain McLeod, who, during our first spring at Cumberland House, stopped us in midstream to give me a drink of whisky out of the tin dipper when I was wet through, also Hugh Vickers, the first prospector who had been in the country. He came not long after we arrived the first time at Cumberland, and always said that he had the unique experience of being the first prospector in the North, never having gone out to civilization and

yet never having discovered anything for himself. He was thirty-two years in Canada before his first trip home. He was an Oxford man and his sister a Girton girl. She came once to visit him, and stayed with us in our little log cabin; a charming girl. I afterwards met her in her own home and had such a delightful visit. How far removed from Cumberland! This by way of digression. They all call up so many memories: Jack Wanless, the eternal bachelor; Tom Creighton, never forgetting himself no matter what happened; Captain Ross; and many, many more. Captain Ross was a character well known by all who have passed through The Pas, and made use of his transportation, and now, alas! gone West by an accident. Most of them were in their hunting clothes and unshaven, and they were a revelation to Ruth, my companion. As I greeted one after the other her eyes became larger and larger, until I am sure they were just like organ stops, but she enjoyed it all and was a real good companion.

It took us two days to reach Cumberland. It was a bad trip; our guide, unfortunately the only one obtainable, was a white man and did not know the trail very well. I had not been over it for six years, but found I had to direct him on several occasions. There were four white families at Cumberland at this time. Three of them took turn about to board us, two weeks at each place. We were left absolutely to ourselves; very different to the old days of hospitality when any stranger was taken in and made at home. Our last two weeks were spent at the Roman Catholic Mission, two sisters (not nuns) keeping house. They were not accustomed to housekeeping, and the larder was very scanty. We got up hungry from every meal, as we tramped miles every day visiting the

different families. The last week was awful, coal oil had been spilled on the bread. They would not make more, and so we had to eat it or go without. The natives all remembered me and were most kind in their welcome, noticing every change in me, even to the inch I had grown since leaving there. They were all very ill.

It was a dreadful time. We had two and three families in each house; two and three and sometimes four in a bed. There was no one to haul water and chop wood, so they had gone in together to help matters out, but it made matters much worse. They would not have one breath of air. Oh, the foulness of those houses! None of the sick people had been bathed for weeks, if ever. We wore masks, but the germs penetrated everywhere. There was no one to bury the dead, as it takes time to thaw the ground in winter. The bodies had been put altogether in one house. There was no one to fish for the dogs, and so they were famished and broke into the house. Oh, the horror of it all! In one shack we found a dead body on the bed, and the poor sick things on the cold floor with draughts blowing all about them, and I don't know how long the corpse had been in the room. I am glad to say we did not lose a case. We worked day and night, turn about, and while I made trips to distant points taking several days, Ruth did the work alone.

On one of these trips I camped at an Indian's shack. They were all sick—parents and three children—in one small room, eight feet by eight feet, with an earth floor, one very tiny window, and one candle. It was dusk when we arrived, my Indian guide and myself. They made us welcome, poor things! I attended to them while the Indian cooked our evening meal, but it was impossible for me to eat, and in all my years of travel among the

Indians it was the only time I was absolutely unable to stand surroundings. I said to my guide, "You must make my bed outside, I cannot sleep here to-night." He replied that I could not sleep outside, that the dogs would eat me; they were all starving. I answered that I would take that chance. I could not stand that room that night. At that he went out, and came in presently to say my bed was ready. When I went out, what was my amazement to find that he had made it in the cariole and elevated the cariole into the trees. He vowed the dogs would eat me. After quite a scramble into it I settled down. He waited to see if I was all right, and off to sleep I went, never wakening until I heard him chopping wood for our morning meal. I could not wash in the house, so made do with a good rub of snow.

The next night we stayed in a much larger house; three families in it in the three corners, and we in the fourth on the floor. I visited all the families in the settlement, found many old friends among them, enjoyed our evening meal, and then settled down for the night. The guide came in presently. It is the custom for the visitor to say the evening prayers. He started, and on and on he went. I said, "For goodness' sake, Charles, how much longer?" He grunted, "Not much more"; but for me there was no end. I finally went to sleep while he was still at it, with occasional grunts from the others. Usually the youngest child pronounces the Benediction, and hymns are sung. It is the same on a trip; the day always ends with song and prayer; and they never shoot on Sunday, even when they are without fresh food.

Ruth had had a busy time in my absence.

We remained six weeks at Cumberland. The Northern

Lights during that time were truly marvellous; a great wonder to Ruth, who had seldom seen them. On one occasion we lay for an hour on our backs in the snow. The display was so truly lovely we could not bear to miss a minute of it. Ruth drew a sketch of us as we appeared that night. I wonder if she has it yet. We returned to The Pas; Ruth went on home, but I remained there for two months. It was a hard, bitter experience for us, but we had the satisfaction of knowing that we had done some good, and the hard work helped me over a very lonely, anxious time when I did not know what news each mail might bring, and sometimes it was two months or more before I would hear from Walter. If the women of the world would get together there would never be another war, for it could never be carried on without the assistance of the women.

I had the great pleasure at this time of renewing acquaintance and visiting several times at the Big Eddy Indian School with the Venerable Archdeacon McKay, a truly great old man. The Pas had been his first mission, over fifty years before we first were stationed there. He had laboured long and faithfully among the Indians and could know that his work was well done. No history of the North-West could be complete without his life included in it; no missionary was ever more faithful, or did more good, or was held in higher esteem, than he among Indians, half-breeds, and white alike—not even Father Lacombe, but the latter had the advantage of being farther South and better known. Another case of being forgotten in the North. The Archdeacon was a small man, with the brightest blue eyes I ever saw in my life. Even at this time, in his advanced old age, they were not dimmed, but sparkled and shone with the humour

behind them. He used to tell one amusing story. When asked if he had any family, he always replied, "Yes, I have thirty-six feet of daughters," and the puzzled inquirer found he had six daughters, each six feet tall.

When I returned to Regina in June, 1919, the military hospitals were closed. I could not be idle, the time was so long. I went to the "Y" hut, and there I remained until the following January. It was hard work and long hours, too; but such a grateful lot of men. It was a wonderful place for them. Finally, most of the women gave up assisting, and the men took their own meals, cafeteria style. It was only necessary to have one helper in the desk. The work was not so hard, but the hours just as long. I met many of the women of Regina in a very casual way during these seven months. Some of their names even I never heard, and yet I was to know them so well and so pleasantly in later years. Christmas and New Year's Day I spent with the men at the hut. We were giving them a party each day. My last Christmas had been at the hospital, working twelve hours to relieve the local girls. When I left in January, 1920, the men at the "Y" hut presented me with a signet ring suitably engraved. It was quite the nicest thing that had ever happened to me.

In October the Prince of Wales arrived. Word was sent out for all nurses and V.A.D.s to report for inspection. Nursing with me at the military hospital had been another V.A.D., by name Minerva, but always known as "The Goddess." She and I were the only two not belonging to the local branch of the St. John Ambulance Corps, but we had worked as long and hard as any of the members. I asked the matron if we might join the inspection, as I felt that would be all the compensation I

would require, just to meet the Prince. (How I wished in after years that our royal family were like the Danish royal family and would give an audience to all of their subjects serving in the Arctic!) She replied that it was not quite in order, as we belonged to another branch. "I am proud of you, Mrs. Munday, of your work, and that you have done it under our branch, I am not just sure what to do, but you just stand at the end of the line and it will be all right." Hardly the attitude we could desire, but we felt we had earned the honour, so at the end of the line I stood, and when the matron arrived there with the Prince she was evidently a little flustered, too, for she said, "And this is Mrs. Munday." I was so astonished; I could only say, "How do you do?" as we shook hands, and he replied, "Pleased to meet you," and there we stood looking at one another for quite a minute, but I was satisfied and proud to have met him, and fully repaid for all my long, hard work. The next day I saw the Prince again, and this time we were each quite alone. He was doing his daily run in the grounds of Government House. I spoke to him, he waved and smiled, and I snapped him.

Walter had returned in time for Christmas, 1919. Oh, the blessed relief of his arrival! Never again, I hope, will such a catastrophe overtake the world as that terrible war to satisfy the ambitions of soulless men and to widow half the world. For New Year's Day my dear little Cinders arrived from Warner. He was small and, Walter thought, more easily moved, but it was a cruel thing to leave Tough behind, dear, faithful, little dog! I never saw him again, but I am sure there is a dog heaven, where some day we shall meet our devoted friends.

CHAPTER IX

NIAGARA FALLS—THE ROYAL "CANADIAN" MOUNTED POLICE

We are nearer God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth.

At this time (1920) the mounted police were absorbing the Dominion police. Detachments were being opened at all points in Ontario and Quebec, and the dear old force was in future to be known by another name, "Royal Canadian Mounted Police." Walter had joined it as the "North-West Mounted Police," then it was made a royal regiment, and now it was to be changed again. All old-timers in the force were sorry, and, very soon after, the retirement of that brilliant and highly esteemed officer, Commandant A. Bowan Perry, took place. He was a loss to the force that was very keenly felt by all ranks; an exceptional man for the position he held. He at different times commended Walter's patrols and work in the Blue Book, and though he withheld from us the fulfilment of Walter's ambition, we always respected him, looked up to him, and deeply regretted his going.

We were longing to be sent to Prince George, but instead were transferred to Toronto, Walter taking down the first party of men to go East, and a prisoner. We could not go even on that trip without one. We were four days and four nights reaching Toronto; huge snow-drifts all over Regina; we could barely see across the barracks' square, and it was 40° below zero on the night we left. We reached Toronto to find the streets all slush, and, oh, so mild! Such a blessed relief!

We had further orders in Toronto to proceed to Niagara Falls, where we spent two really blissful years. We had completely forgotten the country beyond the prairie provinces. The trees were a marvel to us. We walked with our heads in the air, stumbling and stepping over the curbs, etc. We could not see enough of them. We were simply enchanted. We took an old-fashioned corner house on the boulevard between the two bridges, and could see the Falls from the verandah. There were seventy flowering shrubs surrounding it, with an eight feet wide flower bed running the full length of the property, a hundred and fifty feet, and cherry trees in the back garden with real grass. Oh, the richness of that green after the parched prairie! No one can ever realize our joy in the flowers; we were literally intoxicated with it all. Every minute that Walter was off duty he was in the garden. All through that first terribly hot summer he worked. Our place was a glory of beauty and colour; and, oh, the vegetables, what wonders they were! It had been so long since we had had fruit that we often forgot to eat it. It remained on the table until it was bad. We never thought of it, unless we saw it, and we spent all our time outside. It was paradise.

We loved every minute of our time there, and I, for the first time in my life, kept house with modern conveniences—electric light, hot and cold water. Wonderful, just to turn a tap! I had forgotten about such things; and, oh, the joy, the real joy, of the bathroom, with baths every day and two or three times a day that first summer! How I revelled in it all and the people. No one must ever say to me that Western people are more hospitable than Eastern. All did everything in their power to welcome us and make us at home. Poor Walter was only a

"non-com," but it made no difference in the courtesies shown him. At the first Sunday tea given for us by his old friend from Norway House, there was a general, several colonels, majors, captains. They afterwards made him an honorary member of their mess.

And now for the first time we could attend our own church regularly. While we were at The Pas there had only been an evening service, the morning and afternoon being devoted to the Indians, and at Coutts only one service a month, when a visiting clergyman passed through. The rector of Niagara, Canon Gordon, is without exception the most fluent and interesting speaker we had ever heard in any country. We heard him twice on Sunday; with great pleasure and benefit, I hope. I was persuaded to take the presidency of the Women's Guild—very ardous work for the youngest and last admitted member to have undertaken. My reward, if any, will be in heaven, for it certainly was not on this earth! Also, I was secretary and treasurer of Dr. Grenfell's Association, whose work I was to know a great deal more intimately later on.

It was interesting to find that the Guild had made themselves responsible for an Indian child—that is, by sending clothes, etc. to the Indian boarding-school where he lived—and it turned out to be a child whom I had had placed there when I was North nursing the Indians, his parents having died. How small the world is after all!

When I left Niagara Falls to go North again the members of the Guild presented me with a bouquet of flowers from the garden of our old family home, which was greatly appreciated.

During my first week at Niagara I had the very great pleasure of meeting, first in a business way, then socially,

and, finally, through the test of friendship, Mr. and Mrs. Ballard and family, known to us always as "The Royal Family." Through the years they have been our most loyal friends and have shown us only loving kindness always. After we had left our paradise and were hundreds of miles from anyone or any communication with anyone, it was they who were to prove our staunchest friends.

We steeped ourselves in the glories of Niagara; day after day we revelled in it more. It was heavenly. One of our first trips was over the line to Buffalo to visit once again, after fifteen years, the city of our honeymoon. Oh, how much water had passed under the bridge since that time, the hardships and trials we had both undergone, but, thank goodness, still together! There are many thousands of people from the United States who visit Niagara annually; their interest in the force is never-ending, and, in my humble opinion, a great mistake is made in not having a detachment headquarters built, in keeping with the other buildings, and placed in the park with some of the old-time members stationed there; not recruits who have no traditions behind them and no knowledge of the force. Niagara Falls, Banff, Jasper Park, Windsor, and perhaps one or two other points in Canada, should be so equipped, I think, and it would be a splendid way to let some of the old-timers finish their days in the force instead of leaving them on the prairie, in Regina, when many of them have already spent years under just the same conditions.

Walter and I tramped miles over the surrounding country, steeping ourselves in its beauties, absorbing as much as possible of it, which we were so sadly to need in a short time. Some of my ancestors on my mother's side

had had their home at Niagara. The old homestead was still standing at the upper end of the park. I really felt like coming home. After we had left, the Government supplied the detachment with a motor, but, alas, we were out of that also!

Cinders was a very happy little dog, taking daily trips to town alone. He was often found by members of the detachment sitting at a corner of the main streets surveying the traffic. It was all new to him also, prairie bred as he had been. How he escaped the trains, motor-cars, and trams, is a marvel when he had had no experience of them before.

And now for me began a season of pickling and canning. I had never done anything of the kind before and wanted to be sure I would have enough. I kept track of the amount of every blessed thing grown in our garden, and of every pound of everything either pickled, canned, or preserved. Day after day I was hard at it, just loving every bit of it. Great amusement was expressed by my friends at the amount. They thought it was too much, but I wanted to be sure that there was no mistake about it. I actually had enough for two years. How we have laughed since, but we had been starving for green food for so long that I would not take risks.

We had a great joke against one of the men we brought with us from the West. He was Western born and had never been East before. He remained with us five years, and is still in our district; a fine, upright, loyal member of the force. A motor-cycle had been sent for use at the detachment. One day Walter gave instructions to this man, Wiebe, for some investigating at a certain farm, giving the farmer's name and location, and off he started. Now, the whole country was new to him, so after he had

travelled some miles he thought he would inquire to be sure that he was travelling in the right direction. The man from whom he asked directions replied, "Oh, yes, this is the right road; continue straight on to the foot of the mountain and then turn to the right." So on and on he went, straight along the highway until he had travelled hours. Finally, he inquired again, only to be told that, of course, he had come many, many miles too far. "But," he replied, "the last person I asked told me to stay on this road till I came to the foot of the mountain and then turn, and I have not yet come to a mountain." "Not come to a mountain?" the amazed man asked. "Why, you have passed it, there it is over there!" "Mountain," the disgusted policeman said. "Mountain! Why, that isn't even a hill!" And then they did have a discussion. Seldom have I seen such a disgusted man as Wiebe was upon his return. He, of course, being used to the Rockies, never even noticed the famed Hamilton Mountain, and so travelled all day and half the night for a trip of half a day.

One day during the first October little Charlie Ballard came to Walter and wanted to be taught how to rope. Walter had already been giving him boxing lessons, so out to the garden they went and every day he practised diligently until his mother was distracted. He was roping everything and everybody in the house. At the end of the first week he came again to show what he could do and to ask Walter if he thought that if he practised very hard he would be able to rope some of the chimneys on Hallowe'en and pull them over; and so his diligence was explained.

I was a member of the Chatauqua and the Travel Club, for which I had to write papers on varying subjects, from Levi and Japan to the ancient buildings of modern Rome.

All that I loved, delving into old books in the public library, where I spent hours during the winter. Then there was the social life—teas, bridge, dinners, and dances. What a complete change from our old life! The dances here were all given in private homes; lovely old places. One great joke our friends had about us at one of the first dances we attended at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths. Their children were allowed to remain up to see the arrival of the guests and the start of the dance, then they retired. The next day they expressed their great surprise at our appearance, "Why," they said, "Mrs. Munday looked just lovely and not at all tough." How we all enjoyed the laugh! Evidently their idea of the West was what mine had been when first I came out. The eldest of these children is now far advanced in flying in England. Then it was my turn to entertain. Invitations were out, everything in readiness, the day arrived, and in the morning Walter had word that riots had broken out in a village not far from us, where a great number of foreigners were employed, and he had to go, and there I was left alone.

For two winters we enjoyed the change of life more than I suppose we ever will again. Then the wanderlust in us began to stir. We talked often of how the North would be as the different seasons came around, remembered the moose and ducks and geese, and a thousand other little things, and then suddenly volunteers were called for for Arctic service. Again we walked many miles discussing pros and cons and all phases. It was the only branch in the service which Walter had not been through, and so we volunteered. I say "we" this time because a married man was especially wanted, and we were accepted and told where we were to go and when, and so the last

winter we enjoyed to its utmost. "Dad" and I were gradually getting things ready—knitting, making lists, etc., a hundred and one little things—as this time we were to sail from Montreal. I knew we could take many more things to make us comfortable than we had ever had before, and then a blow descended out of the blue. We were told from Ottawa that we would not be required for Arctic service. It had been decided to send someone else.

There was nothing for us to do or say, however; it was so decreed and that was an end of it. At least so we thought. We went about our ordinary life, and I passed through all the horrors of house-cleaning and redecorating. This is one part of civilization which I am thankful to have escaped. I have usually moved instead, which is much to be preferred.

On the day after all was finished and when Walter had spent hours and dollars on the flowers, he received a long distance call to proceed at once to Ottawa. He telephoned me from there to say they had asked again if we were willing to go. He did not want to go back on his word and so we consented, and were told we would be notified in due time. The detachment was known to be the most barren and isolated post in the whole force.

The days passed and no word. We could not be packing up and then not go. Such uncertainty! At last, on June 5, 1922, came word to be ready to sail by the 15th. Such a wild scramble for us with a house full of my old family furniture! We were at our wits' end. Some kind friends took for me some of my very favourite pieces; all the largest I had to sell at a great sacrifice, and they can never be replaced.

When we sailed from Montreal on July 7 it was as well

we did not know what lay ahead of us. Weibe, the aforementioned member of the detachment, had volunteered also and was sent with us, and it was good to have one we knew among the strangers. And so, after a little over two years of paradise, we were wanderers again.

CHAPTER X

CHESTERFIELD INLET—THE FAR NORTH

> And so this life, exempt from public haunt,
> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything.
>
> *As You Like It.*

After spending a day in Montreal, a day of rushing frantically from one place to the other to obtain last-minute articles, of seeing old friends and telephoning to others, we sailed at eight o'clock in the morning of a very wonderful day on July 7, 1922. The heat of the city had been intense, almost more than I could bear, disliking heat as I do. We were on board at midnight the night before, taking Cinders for a walk before turning in, and, incidently, having a view of the flagship H.M.S. *Raleigh*, from England, which was docked next to us. It followed us up the coast of Labrador and was wrecked there, one or two lives being lost, so we were told the following year.

I cannot hope to have anyone see through my eyes the marvels of our trip. Everybody has seen or heard or read of the majestic St. Lawrence from Montreal to the sea, its wide stretches of beautifully wooded banks, and of the sunsets, always a changing wonder. Some few of us also know of the sunrises, but not many of us are ever interested in them. When we see one for the first time we think of what we have missed each morning, and make a mental vow to rise in time for such beauties. We feel so much better when up early, so buoyant and capable of conquering the world, but the very next morning, be our beds ever so hard or our berths ever so narrow, they hold

us so tightly that we are for evermore saying "To-morrow."

We had a very mixed passenger list, some Hudson's Bay Company's men returning to their lonely Northern life after a year's leave among their relatives, and three very young Scotsmen just out from Aberdeen, whom we took on board at Quebec from a ship just arrived from Scotland and anchored in the river. They had come to a lonely, cheerless life. What the country does to them will depend upon their strength, not only of body, but of mind. The Law of the Yukon holds good here, "Send not your foolish and feeble, send me your strong and your sane." We had a high official of the Hudson's Bay Company on board, also Richard Curle, the great English traveller.

On we sailed through the Gulf of St. Lawrence, a veritable sea itself, up the Straits of Belle Isle, northward to the broad Atlantic. We caught a glimpse of Labrador, and straightway our thoughts were full of that noble man, Dr. Grenfell, who had been devoting his life to the benefit of the natives of that cold and isolated country, and who is still striving to bring to them a few of the necessaries of life. I remember my own work in one of his associations and the struggle to interest people sufficiently to make them give some of their surplus clothing to keep a few of the children warm, children who have so few of this life's comforts. If a trip through this country could be made by one or two rich men, I am sure things would be different.

The spring was so late that year and the ice so thick on the coast of Labrador that we had to keep nearly two hundred miles out to sea. This precaution kept us from getting into the floe ice. When within a few days from Port Burwell, which is just around Cape Chidley, the most

northerly point in Labrador, and where we intended to make our first stop, we met the first icebergs coming South, floating palaces from fairyland. We have all seen icebergs on our trips across the Atlantic, but these were many, many times the size of any which I had seen before. Our boat was small indeed compared with them, and such shapes and colours they were! They could only have been fashioned by the hands of fairies, or, when we think of the disasters they have caused, was it fiends? First we saw just one here and there, then they were more numerous and very close to the ship, then they got smaller and smaller, until the first thing we knew we were caught in an ice-field; ice of all colours and shapes, castles and caves, grottos and fountains, with pools which reminded me of the old swimming hole on grandfather's farm, only the water was so cold—so cold, nothing but the seal, which we saw from time to time, could live in it, and such a blue, as though Bridget had forgotten to take her blue bag out of a giant's tub. One would think nothing could be so blue, not even tropical waters. All at once, while yet we marvelled, we could see the ice at a great depth below the surface of the water appearing black as ink, the colour of the tar barrels on our streets at home, and then again it would appear as green as the Emerald Isle. Such wonders! I sat all day in the bow of the boat as we pushed slowly through, ploughing up the ice as a snow-plough does the snow.

The next day the ice was too much for us, we were caught hard and fast, no going forward nor backward, so with the sailors I scrambled down the side of the ship on a rope ladder and took a walk in this fairyland. There were wide cracks to jump, and occasionally the pieces bobbed under us and we thought we had come to the end

of our journey. One of our party, being rather stout, was not as nimble as he might have been, and once in jumping missed the other side, and in trying to save himself fell lengthways into one of the cracks. It was fortunate he was corpulent, as he was wedged there hard and fast. His face is never to be forgotten. He thought all was finished for him, but, amidst much merriment, we finally dragged him forth, very much subdued and very thankful to have escaped with only a wetting in ice water. We explored a mile in all directions taking pictures, which are far from portraying truly any part of the trip. Four days we spent in this world of ice before the wind and tide decided to move and allowed us to sail on once more.

We stopped at Port Burwell for a day or two, where we met the Moravian missionary, who lived at that point, also one of our sergeants, who had been stationed there for a long time. And so we entered the Hudson Straits, which were full of field ice, making travelling exceedingly slow. We crossed the Hudson Straits to Baffin's Land, where we called at Hudson's Bay Company posts to unload cargo, first at Lake Harbour and then Amadjuak. At these places I saw my first Esquimos (the word " Esquimo " is an Indian word meaning " eaters of raw flesh "). The Esquimos do not use that word at all; they call themselves " *Inuit,*" which means " *the* people," which they consider themselves to be.

The unloading of cargo is done by Esquimos, men and women alike, all with long hair and smoking pipes. They are ever ready to eat and seemed very friendly, poor souls, but, oh, so like animals! I cannot describe the feeling of sadness it gave me to see them. They live in a land of almost eternal ice and snow, not a sign of vegetation anywhere, a land harried day and night by gales which are so

THE HUDSON STRAITS. CAUGHT IN THE ICE.

HUDSON STRAITS. AN ICE FIELD.

facing page 134.

savage I sometimes felt as if they had come straight from the devil himself! All we could see were hills of rock. To see these poor people made me wonder why we have so many more advantages and how the scales are to be evenly balanced. I felt as though I would never again complain.

At Amadjuak an attempt had been made to domesticate reindeer for commercial purposes. Reindeer had been taken there from Denmark, five hundred of them, and so far the scheme had been a dismal failure. A better place might have been chosen. Most of them had died, owing to the extreme cold and lack of sheltered spots and scarcity of moss for food.

We anchored overnight off the post at Lake Harbour. We went in at high tide, and when we went out on deck in the morning at low tide there we were nicely tucked in between two most awful looking rocks, sharp peaks and jagged all round. A fine wreck we would have been had we struck either one! So much of the trip was through uncharted waters, where navigation was and, indeed, still remains, difficult. The captains get to know certain places from their years of travel, but they are all in haste to get away again from the vicinity of Chesterfield, as even a compass won't work there where there is so much mineral about. Of course, when the Hudson Bay Railway is in operation these waters no doubt will all be charted. What future generations make of this country remains to be seen. At present it seems that nothing can be found in it or made of it. It is certainly where the foundations of the world stick through.

All my life I have loved rocks, loved to climb and be among them, but I must be blind both physically and spiritually, for I can never find the sermons in stones which we so often hear about. Is it that they teach

patience? They have nothing to hope for or to wait for. Is it perseverance or durability of character? They have nothing to strive for or overcome. Is it the immutability of life everlasting? Well, perhaps, as it seems they always have been and always will be, and death itself is not more silent. But there is no inspiration to be received from them, as there is from the beautiful rivers and forests of our Eastern and Western country.

From the southern coast of Baffin's Land we proceeded along the Hudson Straits to the Hudson Bay, before entering which we made another stop at a post called Woolsenholme. Our progress continued very slow on account of the ice. We saw numbers of seal, walrus, and a few polar bears.

After reaching Hudson Bay we were free of ice and the weather seemed much warmer. While we were in the Hudson Straits the temperature was at freezing point most of the time, and it was nearing the end of July. We took a south-westerly direction across the Hudson Bay to Fort Churchill, that historic old place. The walls of the old Fort Prince of Wales are still standing, and the old cannon lying about. Most of us know the history of its occupation by the British and French in turn, and the many fights around and about it. The old fort was built more than two hundred years ago. The names of some of the occupants, cut in the rocks, can still be seen, dating from 1771 onwards. Our young Scotch passengers had not set foot in Canada until they landed there.

After a few days at Churchill and several interesting walks on shore, we proceeded on our way for another five hundred miles North, coming out at the top of this huge inland sea. Over fifty miles from land we passed an enormous polar bear, who was swimming. What endur-

ance they must have! He was probably swimming from an ice-pan, but it was not in sight. All through the day we saw seal and walrus. Suddenly, on the third day, in a nasty drizzling rain, we sighted Chesterfield, our new home, just around a point. We soon dropped anchor, for there is no harbour, and we were in a heavy fog for three days. Not a very cheerful welcome, everyone said, but fortunately for myself weather never affects my spirits. Storms I love, especially there where we could see the ocean in all its fury. It makes one feel very small indeed. We landed wearing sealskin boots made by the Esquimos, beautifully sewn by the women. They are the only hand-sewn shoes in the world, I believe, that keep out the water. The materials for these shoes require a great deal of preparation. The hair must first be taken off the skin—this requires ardous scraping—and when the skin is dried it is as hard as wood, and while in that condition it is cut with a sharp knife into the required shape. The women and children then chew the skin until it is soft and pliable (no wonder their teeth are worn down almost level with the gums), then it is sewn with sinew. After the boots have been wet and dried they are again as hard as wood, and it is the woman's duty to soften them so that her husband can wear them, and this she does always by chewing. When it is necessary to mend the shoes they must be re-chewed to enable them to be sewn again. Such labour!

The ship remained at Chesterfield for four days unloading supplies, which had to be done at high tide owing to the rocky shore, the cargo being unloaded on to two whaleboats lashed together and rowed ashore.

We were now cut off from the outside world, and could not send nor receive any messages until the winter packet, which left always in February and returned in May, so

that, as it was now the second week in August, it was ten months before we heard a word. In our settlement there were altogether eleven white people, two Company's men, and three Roman Catholic priests living a mile from us, and our six selves. My nearest white woman neighbour was nearly a thousand miles south of us, but having been so long without women for friends I did not miss them. Usually when I return to civilization the first question I am asked about my life at Northern outposts is, "Are you not dreadfully lonely without women?" When I explain why I do not miss them, the questioners always say, "Aren't you funny!" or "Aren't you queer!" until now I am sure I must be.

When we arrived at Chesterfield and for a week after, Knud Rasmussen and some of his party of the Fifth Thule Arctic Expedition were there. They came several times to see us. The other members came from time to time during the following two years, and I might say that it is partly through the very strong urging of one of them, Peter Freucken, that I am writing these notes. He never ceased to urge me each time that I saw him. They were all most interesting men.

CHAPTER XI

OUR FIRST WINTER ON HUDSON BAY

Our first month at Chesterfield we were all so busy we did not have time to be lonely nor miss anything. The ice had gone out of the Bay (shore ice which extends out into the Bay for about fifteen miles) on August 1. We had arrived on the 8th, the height of Arctic summer, and there was still frost every night. Imagine the difference after the intense heat we had left at Montreal! The air was glorious, but the nights were drawing in and we had snow during the first part of September. Towards the end the inland lakes were frozen smooth and clear and we had a few good days of skating before the snow came.

Before the arrival of the ship, the natives had brought in three polar bear cubs; the dogs killed two, but the remaining one was a great pet, going around the house like a dog, coaxing for food, especially anything sweet; he would even get on the beds and play with the boys. The sergeant whom we relieved took him out on the ship and he was sent to the National Park at Banff, Alberta, where he is now, a tremendous fellow, greatly admired by all tourists. I visited Banff in 1925 and saw him, he did *not* remember me, though the keeper let me just inside his cage to take a photograph.

We had some exciting seal hunts before freeze-up, the very best sport there is, I believe (although with us it was a case of necessity and not sport). The seal has such a good chance of getting away. We used to go out in a whaleboat. Now the seal is a curious animal. The natives called it by whistling or rubbing the barrels of their

guns on the edge of the boat, and it would come up to look around. Our boat was on the move and the seal's head turning from side to side, so that one had to be a very good shot indeed to get one. In the winter it was much better. We went out over the frozen sea ice on sledges to the end of the floe, and there we sat on a deerskin rug calling the seals. Whether we went by boat or sledge it was very cold, and there was not much to look forward to in our lunches. There was often a heavy, black fog hanging over the water, which gave everything a very distorted shape. A duck looked like a whaleboat, a whaleboat like a ship, and a man huge like a giant and misshapen; it was most curious and weird. Dogs were like musk-oxen, and it has sometimes appeared as though thousands of caribou were passing on the ice. Occasionally this fog was very heavy and black, at other times light in colour and of whipped cream appearance, fold after fold of it, really beautiful. Always in travelling it could be seen hanging over the open water at sea, so that in daylight a fair direction could be kept; but, oh, the travelling compared to the bush trips further south, it was agony!

The first snow of the year came on September 13, and by October everything was frozen hard and fast, and remained so for eight months. Oh, the preparations necessary to go for even a fifteen minute walk in the winter! House clothes to come off and deerskins to go on. Only native clothing is suitable out of doors in that climate. The deerskin clothing is almost the same for the men and women, and is made by the Esquimo women. Fawnskins make the best clothing, being softer and hide thinner; next, the summer skins, when the hair is shorter and finer. These clothes are worn next to the skin, no underclothes, and not the slightest irritation is felt, the

CHESTERFIELD. OURSELVES IN ESQUIMO CLOTHES.
34° BELOW ZERO.

facing page 140.

hair being as soft as velvet. Two suits are worn, one with the hair next to the skin and the other with the hair out. They consist of wide, short trousers, a coat with an opening for the head, and a capote, deerskin stockings and boots, with the hair next to the feet. A sole is put on the boot with the hair out to prevent slipping on the hard snow, this wears off quickly and on a trip has to be constantly replaced. The clothing is absolutely wind proof and very warm. The thread used in the sewing of it is made from sinew, therefore very strong.

The hauling, pushing, and shoving to get into the *koo-le-tang* (coat) and out of it again was maddening, and, oh, the condition of my hair! On bad days I would beg Walter not to make me go out; but he was inexorable, he knew we must have exercise, and so every day that we could go, I stormed and talked myself into and out of my clothes. All the time on our walks I kept wriggling my face to keep it from freezing. The white man's theory of thawing frost-bite by application of snow to the frozen part is entirely exploded by the Esquimo. If he sees any of his companions' faces frost-bitten he pops the part into his mouth and it is soon thawed. Rarely, if ever, any other portion of the body would get frost-bitten, except perhaps the hands.

Just at freeze-up one year, while we were walking across one corner of a lake about three-quarters of a mile from home, and which we thought was frozen, the ice gave way and let me down to my neck. I had on a koo-le-tang and deerskin stockings and moccasins over my house clothes. I waded ashore, clambered out, and before I could reach the house at that short distance, everything on me was almost solid ice and I could scarcely walk; no ill-effects though, because we were too near home, and,

fortunately, I seldom, if ever, have a cold. A hot "tub" soon made me comfortable again.

If Shelley or Hutchinson had ever lived in this part of the Northern lands they would never have penned the now famous lines, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?" because there simply isn't any spring either for the country or the inhabitants—these poor "People of the Twilight!"

The cold, the snow, the unending nights, and the monotony we could easily have put up with, had it not been for the constant gales. They are the worst torment that any climate could provide. They penetrate anything and everything, burn one like fire, sting like needles, and drive the snow with such blinding force that we could not see our hands and feet. As for following a track or attempting to travel from point to point, it was utterly impossible. Even the Esquimos would not venture out at times. It has been 50° below zero and a gale blowing. This will seem incredible to one who has not experienced it. On some days, when it was not cloudy, and towards spring, the sun would shine brightly in the middle of the day and the sky appear as blue as sapphire, and yet such a terrific ground blizzard would be blowing that one could not go ten feet from the house with safety for fear of being lost. Most of our windows were completely covered with snow up to the second floor, and from one of them we could see the little mice burrowing and all their runways, poor little things. Cinders and Tim, our officer's terrier, would jump up at the windows and bark at them.

There had been formerly one small house for a party of three, but now the party was doubled. We had brought in sufficient lumber for another house of the same size, and one of the men was supposed to be a carpenter, but he knew scarcely the first thing about it, with the result

that we suffered greatly from cold that first winter. I shall never, indeed, forget it as long as I live.

Our house was by the side of a small lake, which in winter was frozen through to the bottom, a depth of fifteen feet, so that for our water supply we had to cut ice and melt it. This was done daily. (In summer the water was filtered through several thicknesses of cloth, as it had a whole menagerie of live stock in it, of all colours, shapes, and sizes.)

In very cold weather the ice on the lake would crack, making a loud report. The first time I heard it I was out walking on it, and, actually, I thought I had been shot, or that the ice was opening and letting me through. Some of the cracks were several inches across.

On some days towards spring the sunrises were gorgeous, sending great shafts of brilliant crimson and orange far across the heavens; again, they were the most delicate shades, blue, mauve, green, and pink, like the inside of a shell; then the whole country looked like fairy-land, nothing could be more exquisitely delicate, but when the sun got higher the scene changed, and all we could see for miles and miles in every direction was a barren, desolate waste of country with no living creature in sight. When we remembered the hard struggle it was to obtain food we felt that it was far from being fairyland, or was at least only inhabited by wicked fairies and ghouls.

Prior to our arrival, there had been a trading schooner wrecked not far from Chesterfield. Some free-traders had ventured into the Bay, but met with disaster. The goods had been divided among the few white men there—auctioned, I believe—by the owners. One of our men had bought some of the goods and made a pile of them near the house, and what we should have done without those

articles I do not know. The very dishes we were using came from them. Anything and everything we wanted we would say, "Well, we will go out to the wreck." A constable and I spent hours there; it was always interesting. A porcelain basin from one of the cabins had been saved; the boys put that up in the bedroom and fed it from a barrel and a pipe in the hall. The real comfort of being able to turn the tap into the basin cannot be imagined by those used to comforts all their lives. It drained out into a pail, which had to be emptied, but we did not mind that.

We had in the two houses altogether six stoves going day and night and burned about six tons of coal a month in the winter. The coal was brought in to us on the ship, and was hard nut-size coal (anthracite). In the newly built house, where we lived the first winter, there were three of us, occupying two bedrooms, a sitting-room, and the office. With the fires going full blast, water would freeze six feet from a stove. As we sat reading I would have three jumpers on, an eiderdown robe wrapped around me, and my feet on a stool, and yet I would be so cold I could scarcely hold the book. The lumber being green it cracked and the nails would be drawn out. Between the cracking of the ice and the cracking of the house it was really awful. I do not exaggerate when I say that the reports could not be distinguished from rifles of different calibre. It was just as though we were being besieged. Tim and Cinders would jump and bark when the cracks took place. We had a great dread of fire, the worst disaster to befall a detachment in the North, for it meant that we would have to live in *igloos* (snow-houses), therefore we were always most careful in every way.

It was the hardest winter I ever put in in my life, but

during the building we had no thought of that, everything went swimmingly. I did the cooking, and the boys were ravenous for every meal. I did not dream any men could have such appetites. They all worked on the building until dark. Always for an hour in the evening I took the two little dogs for a walk. In the light of after events I wonder how I ever survived. I led them on a leash until we were well away from the house and the huskies and then let them run. Cinders was obedient, but Tim never, and it was most difficult to get him back. Sometimes I have seen the pack of huskies hunting in the distance. I gathered a dog under either arm and hid under the rocks until they were well away. If I had Cinders alone I often had to hold him high over my head while they were sniffing around me, fortunately they were not hungry at such times. The huskies thought he was a little white fox, the Esquimos said, though they themselves called him "*Micky Oo-ming-muck*," meaning "little musk-ox." Nothing could have saved either of us if the huskies had ever caught him.

I tried hard to teach the Esquimos to help me wash clothes and clean the house, but found it quite impossible. With the Indians it had been simple; I had just to show them once and they did it always quickly and well. I had the same woman at each place all the time I was at Cumberland and The Pas, but the Esquimos first of all had never seen white women's clothes nor used soap. They had not the haziest idea how to use the latter. I showed them exactly, over and over again, how the washing should be done. They watched carefully and would assure me they understood, all by signs, of course, but a flicker of intelligence seemed to come into their faces and I would be sure they knew. Then they would start. They rubbed so much

soap on that the clothes were literally stiff, and then they would not rinse it out. "What is the use of putting soap on to clean the clothes and then rinsing it out?" they argued, and what could I say? As they have neither chairs nor tables in their igloos, I had quite a time getting them to put the tub on a chair. They would have it on the floor and stoop over, not get down to it properly, but bend down. It can be readily understood there wasn't much strength behind a rub in that position, and no matter how I divided the clothes, the stockings would go in with the tablecloths. Finally, I had to give it up, and each one of our party did his own washing and I did the ironing and mending. Literally miles of patches I have put on for the different boys at various times, and hundreds of buttons, to say nothing of darning and altering uniforms, pockets in breeches, lining in coats, and altering trouser legs. The boys called me "the regimental tailor." I always used a nest egg for darning; the darning itself surprised the Esquimos, while, together with the nest egg, it was too much, and then the knitting! I made jumpers and socks. They really loved that and wanted to do it also, and one or two I taught. When I would be ironing there was always a native or two looking in at the windows smiling and expressing astonishment as the clothes became smooth under the iron. They were greatly interested in everything I had.

We all had a hearty laugh when they were unloading our goods and furniture. We took with us four large upholstered chairs. Such things had never been in the country before. When one old fellow set the chair he had been carrying down on the ground he stood a long time looking at it, and as the others came they stood talking and looking for some time. Finally, the old fellow decided

to sit in it. As he sat, the springs, of course, let him down. He jumped up with such an expression of surprise on his face and we all laughed. I think he expected it to be like the rocks, their usual seats. Also, I had a rug for the living-room. One day when the door was open I was using the sweeper, and, oh, how wonderful they thought that was! They all gathered around and kept saying "*Ma-a! Ma-a!*" their term of surprise about anything, and very great expression they put into it. They always wanted to know all about everything, and the hardest thing I ever attempted was to try and explain things to them. They know so little and have so little in the country with which to make comparisons. My silk blouses greatly interested them, and I wanted to tell them that the silk had been spun by worms. There are no worms in the Arctic. I wanted to say it was as fine as cobwebs, but there are no cobwebs there! At every turn I found myself unable to compare.

Soon after we arrived we took to work for us a small Esquimo boy, a half-breed. He was very small, but very bright and quick. He was about fourteen, as near as we could find out.

The Esquimos have no way of counting or reckoning time, only by some incident which has occurred about the same time. For instance, when a certain whaling ship had called there, or when a certain captain was on board, or when a particular policeman or Hudson Bay man had arrived there. They have only two seasons, when the sun is high and the dark days, so that it is most difficult to arrive at anyone's age.

This little boy, whom we called "Scotty," in delicate reference to his father, who had sailed to these parts on a whaler and then sailed away again, was by far the

brightest native we ever came in contact with. We made him wear white man's clothes with which we provided him, and also we had a room for him and a real bed, none of which he ever had before. The first day we took him we told him he must have a bath. We got a tub, water, and towels ready. He had never had one in his life before and had not the faintest idea what to do. It was so funny. Walter washed his back and showed him how to carry on, and I, slipping outside, met a constable, and I hesitate to admit we were guilty of looking in the window. We could not resist. Then we gave him pyjamas to sleep in. Walter put them on him and sent him off to bed. Of course, the poor child had never slept in a bed with bedding in his life. All Esquimos sleep in a deerskin sleeping-bag, into which they slip perfectly nude, so when we went to turn out Scotty's light, there he was in bed all right, sound asleep, with the pyjamas carefully laid on the floor beside him. He was a funny little fellow in the way he did everything. He became very fond of his bath and his clean clothes, and if I forgot to put out his fresh pyjamas he would come to me for them.

Several times I saw him quite frightened. The first time was when we had jelly for dessert. When I put his dish down beside him he watched it a moment, and when he saw it all shivering he jumped up and ran out; he thought it was alive. The next time the boys were going about the kitchen, when one of them, who had artificial teeth, yawned, and as he opened his mouth his teeth fell down. The look of utter consternation on the child's face I shall never forget, so we tried to explain, this time with better success, as we had the walrus tusks to show him. They use them for so many articles of their own that he could understand. The little fellow never came in without

MYSELF AND ESQUIMO WOMAN.

facing page 148.

CHESTERFIELD ESQUIMOS.

THE BOY IS "SCOTTY."

bringing me something—a bird, a duck, an Arctic mouse, a ground squirrel, a lemming, etc., and all alive. What he expected me to do with them, or where I was to keep them, I don't know. Surreptitiously I let them go, for I would not have hurt him for anything in the world. One day he brought me a string of fish, the queerest spotted, spiked fish I ever saw. I should not say string, Esquimos do not possess such a thing, they were on a tiny ivory spear made from the walrus tusk.

Scotty was a daily joy to me. I had more amusement from him than from any child I ever knew. He ruled over every native in the settlement. They all gave way to him. The other children he absolutely dominated, but he always wanted my assurance for anything before he would do it and called me "mother." It had been intended by the Esquimos that he should be trained for an *antikoot* (medicine man), but he was too quick-tempered, very often becoming enraged with the Esquimos, and so that idea was abandoned. He was a wonderful little hunter, both of foxes and seals, and a splendid shot. When towards the end of September we were able to skate upon the lakes, another surprise for the natives, Scotty, of course, had to have my skates. In two days he could skate as well as I ever had. He could not speak a word of English, and as we did not have an interpreter the first year, I did fairly well in learning Esquimo from him. He was supposed to have the spirit of his mother's father, and always called his mother "*A-na-na*" (Esquimo for "daughter"), and she always called him "*A-ta-ta*" ("father").

During this first winter I heard of Maria, the little girl whom Walter had met years before at Churchill, where she was living then with her parents, who were working for the police. She was twelve then and was taught to

read, write, and talk English by the doctor and the wife of the then O.C. of the post. I wrote to her and asked her if she would come to work for me. By the first open water she came, a sweet, pretty girl, married to an Esquimo and with two children. I did not have her actually do any work, only sewing, but she spoke splendid English and was a good interpreter. For over a year she was with me, a faithful friend, and she is still acting as interpreter for the police. She told me that the only good the white people had ever done in that country was to leave their women-folk behind, for the natives became so fond of them that it was like taking a piece of their lives away when they left. She referred to Churchill, as I was the first white woman who ever lived at Chesterfield.

During the winter one of the priests went with two natives to one of their caches for meat. The caches in the Arctic have to be made with rocks. The meat is put on the ground and rocks and stones piled high over it as securely as possible to keep it safe from the depredations of the foxes, wolves, and polar bears, but even so, with all care, the animals break in, and it was often a serious matter when we were depending on the cache for food for ourselves and the dogs. The caches in the bush country are very different, being built high up in the trees. A cache is a very sacred thing in the North country. No traveller ever touches another traveller's cache unless he is absolutely destitute, as all know the serious results which may follow.

This priest had never travelled before at this time of the year, it was a fifteen-day trip. When it lengthened into three weeks and there was no sign of him or his companions, we had to send out search parties. Walter found traces of their dogs (all had died from starvation),

but the priest, badly frozen, had reached a Hudson Bay post, two hundred miles away, where he remained a month. The dogs, by the way, were ours, and had been borrowed for the trip, as the mission had no dogs of their own.

Christmas was a strange celebration. Of course, the Esquimos—those, that is to say, in the Chesterfield area—really know little about it. Although the Roman Catholic Mission is there and an attempt is being made to christianize the natives, little progress, if any, is possible with the older ones, but it is the children whom they hope to convert. All seasons were alike to them, and time was only measured by sleeps and moons. I almost wish we had not known when Christmas was. However, we made the best of it with what we had, dressing for the occasion, and I might say that sometimes a constable would come to me on other than feast days and say, "Do put on your silk stockings and satin pumps to-night, and perhaps your silk frock, if it isn't too cold, and we can pretend we are out again for awhile." I suppose I did look a bit of a frump in woollen stockings, heavy brogues, a Harris tweed, and a jumper in the house, but I was so often almost a block of ice that I could not wear lighter and more attractive clothes. With a few parcels I had brought in with me, marked very carefully by my most kind friends, "not to be opened until Christmas," Christmas seemed almost festive. The Hudson's Bay Company men sent me a narwhal tusk, which I have since had made into a floor lamp with great success. One parcel contained crimson butterfly crackers, which were our only decoration, and caused some merriment, as our guests for the day were the three Roman Catholic missionaries, who had never seen crackers. When they were pulled, the rhymes

read, and the caps put on, we waxed quite merry. I had some real plum pudding with me, and the day before Christmas one of our party brought in two small caribou. This was appreciated, as we had been without fresh meat for some time, and we were so glad to have the caribou for that day.

We were not well off for food of any kind that winter, there was practically no variety. The party at Chesterfield had, as I have said, previously consisted of three, and we were six. Those in charge overlooked this fact, and sent only enough fresh supplies for three persons, they also overlooked the fact that a large quantity of the stores already there had been ruined by climate and water. We had to be most economical. Only one ship a year touches here, and should anything happen to her, as has been the case in past years, we would have been badly off indeed, and would have had to live completely off the country or go out by whaleboat (an open boat) to Churchill, a trip of five hundred miles around a coast where there are no camping places.

The eternal canned meat was fearful eating, no taste and so salty, no nourishment in it. It has all been boiled to rags. I really preferred cold boiled bacon, though it was not altogether appetizing either, as it had been at the detachment for two years, and for shipping to that country it is rolled in a creosote preparation, the flavour of which more or less permeates the whole piece. It has to be soaked, then given at least two boilings before it is at all palatable. The hams we tethered to a lifebuoy in the centre of the lake and left them there for forty-eight hours before boiling. Our food really might have been a little better.

I decided that when I left the country I would like to

be a Government inspector of a meat canning factory and an evaporated vegetable factory, for I would certainly be in a position to pass judgment on such goods. It would be severe punishment to those in authority in canning factories if they were made to live on their own produce for weeks and months, then perhaps they would be more particular as to what they put in the cans. The canned meat is all alike. The vegetables are never sorted before being dried, as they are always full of parings and bad spots, evidently cut up regardless of these last. The canned vegetables are much more palatable, though there is always too much liquid in the can and not enough vegetable. I suppose that is where the profit is made, and, of course, they froze solid, and when they were thawed out were more watery than ever. I must mention about the opening of cans. I am sure I am safe in saying, and everyone who has had any experience with them will heartily agree, that they are the cause of many bad tempers, and that a great tendency to use anything but good English is the result of trying to open cans with the keys which are supplied. It can never be done. The piece of tin being wound off always breaks after the first few turns. I am not holding a brief for the Bluenose butter people, but in all my experience in opening all kinds of canned goods, theirs are the only tins which can be properly opened with the keys; their butter is also excellent. Why, oh, why, cannot the other firms take a pattern from them?

CHAPTER XII

WALTER'S LONG PATROL

DURING our first winter Walter made several patrols, one long one of almost a thousand miles. While on this patrol he learned that one native had killed another and fled northward to the sea coast. Walter and one faithful native, "Nou-vee-a" (clouds), who always accompanied him, pursued as long as weather would permit, but the murderer had a month's start, and it was late in the season, so Walter was unable to get him. He was caught by some of our men almost two years later on King William's Land in the Arctic Ocean. Walter had been given the power of a justice of the peace and coroner, the officer the powers of two justices of the peace and coroner, but for cases of murder a judge had to be brought in from civilization for the trial of the accused. Part of the country through which Walter travelled no white man had ever before seen.

The natives were more or less hostile, being very superstitious and very much afraid of the dead body of the murdered man, which had been left lying exactly as it had fallen. It had been necessary for Walter to take two other natives with him from a distant tribe, as the country being travelled was unknown to Nou-vee-a. When the body was found not one native would assist in any manner in the examination or burial of it; in fact, all stood a quarter of a mile distant while Walter examined wounds, etc., and finally drew the body on a sledge to the rocks and covered it up. The sledge and snow-shovel, Walter's deer-skin boots and mitts, were left with the body, besides all

the man's belongings. When Walter returned to where the natives were waiting they were all very pleased that they had not been made to help him. Food was very scarce on the trip, both for men and dogs, the latter not having eaten for nearly a week, when finally some caribou were sighted, and shot. Walter and Nou-vee-a rested a day to feed the dogs, poor things. The endurance they have is amazing.

During part of the time Walter was away the men went off hunting also, leaving just myself and the officer to keep the home fires burning. He was as kind as could be, but understood neither the fires nor the lamps. We used gasolene lamps, which required air pumped into them before lighting, also coal oil lamps with wick and mantle, which gave an incandescent light, splendid, but absolutely a "one man lamp," for without constant care they smoked and covered everything with a thick pall. I was nearly frozen solid, as nearly every night my bedroom fire went out. I thought I never would survive. Scotty, always bright and helpful, came in early in the morning to attend to it, but the nights were endless. My nose would be numb and my eyelashes frozen together from my breath. I could not open them until I rubbed them, and as for turning over on my pillow I did not dare move from the spot I had warmed; and, oh, the boredom of those days! The officer had a most unfortunate habit of repetition. He told the same stories over and over again. He had told them all to me coming up on the ship—several times—and now every single night I heard them again, no matter what I said to stop him, until sometimes I thought I must scream, but he was so kind and cheerful about it all that I felt mean to be so bored.

The winter mail-packet, consisting of one dog sledge

with ten dogs and two natives, left Chesterfield for Churchill, a distance of about five hundred miles through barren lands, on February 20. For such a distance sufficient dog food cannot be carried on the sledge, and so they must hunt caribou *en route* for dog feed. This is the reason for the long time taken on the trip.

The arrival of the return mail-packet in May, the first in ten months, was a great day. For weeks we had been looking across the endless frozen spaces for the dog team. Every black speck that loomed up we rushed for the glasses. Usually it was only a seal out on the ice for a sleep, sometimes it would be incoming natives. Then there was great excitement, until we could tell by the approaching dogs that they were not the right ones. Finally, when the mail did arrive there was a wild rush to meet it, to get the mail unloaded into the house and sorted. Then I had an all night reading of my forty letters, and what joy and sorrow the different ones caused, what bitter disappointment to find that some had missed the mail, and then after they were all read, what a feeling of utter aloofness I had, of being absolutely cut off from everyone and everything, with the realization that the letters were months old, most of them as much as five months, as the mail leaves "outside," as civilization is always spoken of, in January, and that almost anything could have happened in that time. Those feelings I never could describe, it seemed almost that I had died and all the world was left behind, and then the real pleasure of the arrival of the mail was marred by Walter's absence.

When he had been gone a month we began each day to look for him, and finally one day we saw through the glasses a team approaching from the right direction, about an hour out. I dressed hurriedly and went out to meet

CHESTERFIELD. ESQUIMO'S SUMMER CAMP.

facing page 156.

him. Sure enough it was Walter with his faithful Nou-vee-a. My relief was so great and Walter's appearance so changed that for the first time through all of his arduous trips I wept. He was burned absolutely the colour of copper, his hair was snow white, both he and Nou-vee-a had been snow-blind, and had had to remain in their igloo until recovered enough to travel. For the whole of that trip Walter had had no heat other than that from a small primus lamp, which is a Swedish lamp burning coal oil and air similar to a blow torch, and is only large enough to hold one small kettle at a time. There is not much riding on top of a load, because there are no trails, but plenty of rocks, and the sledge must be assisted over every obstacle. The going could not well be harder, but physically Walter was in splendid condition, not tired, nor stiff the next day. I was very proud of him, for the boys who had returned two days before him and had only travelled eighty miles, and were years younger, were done out and stiff for days.

After the excitements of the mail-packet and of Walter's arrival were over, there was nothing to do but our daily round until August, when we would look for the ship. No newspapers can be carried on the winter packet, the distance is too great, so our only news was from a large packet of clippings which I received from the "royal family." They had commenced cutting items of interest from the papers the very week we left Niagara Falls. Only those who have been out of civilization for months at a time can understand the appreciation of that package. After we had all read them they were passed to the others in the settlement. When the newspapers did arrive by ship we did not try to read them all at once, but carefully sorted them and read one a day as long as they lasted. If

only radio could have been there then what a boon it would have been!

We had occasional games of chess and bridge during the winter with the priests. It was very funny when we went to their house. I often used to wonder what the bridge club at Niagara would think if they could see me: the priests in their cassocks all in order and I in fur trousers, etc., but it was a little break in the daily round. They were good bridge players, and we would have enjoyed more frequent games had weather permitted.

As we used to sit reading, night after night, during the long, long winter, I often thought of those lines by Longfellow from "The Haunted House":

> The stranger at my fireside cannot see
> The forms I see, nor hear the sounds I hear;
> He but perceives what is, while unto me
> All that has been is visible and clear.

Many an hour I sat in silent meditation, communing with absent friends, some of whom, alas! had passed to the Great Beyond before I could see them again.

In March the days began to lengthen, but the weather continued extreme with terrific blizzards and the thermometer registering as low as 56° below zero, the coldest we experienced at any time at Chesterfield. For the first four days in April it was between 30° and 35° below zero; cold weather continued throughout the month with frequent blizzards, the days lengthening very quickly. For five days in the early part of May we were unable to go outside the house on account of blizzards, and it was not until May 28 that we had the first slight thaw. By this time daylight was continuous for the full twenty-four hours. It was necessary to put dark covers over the blinds to enable us to sleep at night, and I have taken pictures at

all hours of the twenty-four. Towards the end of May, when the sun was getting stronger, the glare on the unrelieved expanse of white ground was really very hard on one; nothing to be seen but a glistening white plain. Under such conditions if anyone were to live alone I can readily understand his developing snow madness.

By June 1 we had had just two days which were mild enough for the snow to begin to settle. As a matter of fact, we had very little snow, except where it drifted around buildings and rocks and the igloos. In those places it was often twenty feet deep and fifty feet in width, through which we had to tunnel to our door.

By the end of June the small inland lakes were open, but the shore ice of the Bay was still fast for fifteen miles out. But there is an end to all things. At last it was July, the snow was gone and the shore ice moved out the latter part of the month. The buildings had been painted inside and out, and we made daily trips, some of us, to the Point to see if the ship were in sight. Wiebe and myself always felt the heat more than any other member of the party. It had been the same in Niagara Falls, we would be weak with the heat, while Walter was enjoying himself in the garden, and it was the same now. As soon as any warmth came with the sun we felt it, and one day he said to me, " What about a swim?" Of course, I was ready. We tried to steal away, as I was sure Walter would stop us, knowing how cold the water was, ice being still on the banks, but he caught us. However, he followed on with the camera. We went in on three different occasions and enjoyed it. Day after day from July 15 we never passed a window without looking to see if the ship were in sight. On July 31 I went with Wiebe to the Point, where we sat the whole afternoon watching the

tide, which rises and falls over fifteen feet at Chesterfield, and hoping for a glimpse of the ship, but suddenly out of nowhere a dense fog enveloped us. We started for home, but got lost and had a dreadful time to get finally out of it. If it had not been for the fog we could have seen the ship, for she was almost within our sight when she had to stop and remain all night for the fog to lift.

In the morning I was just up and dressing and going in for breakfast when I saw her coming, and then could not believe it, as no one else had seen her. Then there was excitement! The mail had been bad enough, but this was very different! It was pouring with rain, so everyone ran in different directions looking for slickers (oil-skins) and seal boots and getting the motor-boat ready. Finally, they were off, the ship anchoring a mile or two off shore, and I was left to wait for them to return with the mail, etc. Two solid hours I paced back and forth before any of them returned. After giving me some mail and talking awhile, Wiebe casually remarked, "Oh, by the way, Staff is an inspector now." I looked at him a moment and replied, "Do not joke about anything like that." One of the others corroborated it, and so, at long last, justice had been done, and Walter had received his fair and just reward for a lifetime of faithful service. I made answer that, if that was so, then "God was in His heaven and all was well with the world."

Those from the settlement had only just reached shore again, after their visit to the ship, when one of the worst storms we had ever had blew up, and for three days and nights no one could either get to the ship nor leave her. Can anyone imagine the aggravation of those days? We had only received a small part of our mail and all of our parcels were still on board and the ship in full view, both

anchors dragging and the smaller boats high and dry. One of our large canoes was lifted and carried some distance down the beach. The storm was terrific, simply no describing it, but on account of it the ship was obliged to remain three days longer to unload cargo and reload with furs. The officers on board dined with us and we dined with them, and had turkey and real potatoes. We had not tasted either of these delicacies since we landed at Chesterfield. The Roman Catholic bishop had come up on the ship to ordain one of the brothers. We had known him as a priest in the bush country. We attended the ordination, a most interesting ceremony in that out of the way place. The bishop also came to see us; he had always thought a great deal of Walter in our days in the bush.

Finally, on the sixth day, the ship was to sail, and we went on board to say good-bye. The captain of transport, who always travelled on the ship, gave me six oranges, six little balls of gold they seemed, the only ones I tasted in the two years. At last she was off, and again we were shut off from the outer world for a year, and believing it to be our last year, it was longer a good deal than the first one. Three of our party left by the ship, while two new members were added, also one more priest and another Company's man, so instead of eleven white people, as the first year, we had twelve, and this year the Company's men could also play bridge, and so we had a little more society. They always tried to come over once a week when weather permitted, but I was never in their house for so much as a cup of tea during the entire two years.

By the end of July or the first part of August the ice is always gone, and we had what we called summer. Then we could go out in our launch, but we could not travel any great distance, as it was impossible to carry enough

fuel for both ways, and the winds were terrible, so violent that it was not safe too far off land, and there were no harbours. We still had to wear deerskin coats when out on the water, and sometimes when out walking. The nights begin to lengthen about the middle of July, and by August we were almost ready for our next long winter.

After the departure of the ship we commenced unpacking freight. Most of our parcels had been packed with it. Such a time we had finding them, and they were such varied parcels.

Some were marked "Not to be opened until Christmas." Those I put carefully away, for I knew quite well what it would mean to have something on that day. The "royal family" had sent me the most varied box, all of my very favourites in it: Limburger cheese, Spanish onions, boxes of sweets, etc., topped off with a real rose from our garden—waxed—which I still cherish. The onions were beyond price, the taste of them was as nectar of the gods, something fresh. We ate some every day for weeks. The Government had also sent us some, which came in good condition, and which we were able to keep until the freeze-up to eat fresh, and then they cooked well, and, besides, we had fresh potatoes. Walter, in ordering them, had asked that new ones might be sent, as he thought they would keep, and they did. We were most careful and had them until the beginning of March; really wonderful!

Also we had a pig, which we bought from the ship and kept until October 15, but by that time the food was freezing so hard every day we had to have it killed. We had one roast a week while it lasted. The natives would not touch one mouthful of it, as they will eat nothing that is fed by man, and yet, poor things, they will eat bacon

and canned meat if they can get it, and don't realize that these are the meat of animals fed by man. I pickled the feet of the pig, made headcheese, and rendered the lard. Oh, such doings! The first year when leaving the ship we had purchased a pig also, a much smaller one. We put it in what we thought was a dog-proof pen, but the dogs killed it the first night, actually there wasn't the slightest bit of that little pig to be found but the tip of its nose. The ship carries live pigs, sheep, and hens, which are killed when fresh food is desired.

Maria was with me now every day. When possible I had long visits with her to different igloos, learning all I could about customs, habits, and taboos of the Esquimos. Oh, the odoriferousness of those visits, though I tried always to keep my nose in place and my face a blank so that the Esquimos would not know what my feelings were! I hope some day there may be found volunteers from the Anglican Church to go among these people. What is badly needed is a doctor missionary. Why that cannot be is quite beyond the comprehension of my lay mind. They do not want theology, they want Christianity, which to reach them at first must be through their bodies, all they know anything at all about yet. Also they should have the example of right living. I do not believe that they should be civilized to the extent of houses and that sort of thing, for it would not agree with them any more than it does with the Indians, but they could be shown a great deal and still allowed to follow their own mode of life. One or two of them remember yet Bishop Lofthouse when, many years ago, he was in charge at Churchill, where he and his family underwent such terrific hardships, which he so graphically and interestingly tells of in his book, " A Thousand Miles from a Post Office."

Can city dwellers grasp the immensity of that, I wonder! The Bishop, after his return to England, married for the second time an "in-law" of Walter's, and so we were doubly interested in knowing that his efforts had been remembered.

A few of the natives had heard through an Esquimo from Baffin's Land of the Protestant religion. They knew the Lord's Prayer. Before I left I gathered them together and had a little talk with them. They promised to remember what they knew and to endeavour to practise it until one of our missionaries could go among them. My disappointment was very great indeed when, upon the arrival of the ship of the year we came out, I found one of our own missionaries going to a far Southern post. He had had to come round by ship to reach his own post in the south end of James' Bay. I explained to him about these few people, and asked him to say a few words to them, but he did not. I afterwards learned that the reason for this was owing to a "gentlemen's agreement" between the Anglican and Roman Church, the latter having been established at Chesterfield first. If some of our younger clergymen could understand the life and the needs, I feel sure there would be no dearth of applicants. Mr. Girling, who did such splendid work in the Western Arctic, we knew very well when he first came from England; a delicate young chap, but brimful of zeal. His untimely end was a sad loss to our church. The adventure and the opportunity to do good ought to appeal to many young clergymen.

CHAPTER XIII

BIRDS AND NATIVES

I HAVE read Stefansson's books with great interest, and all that he says of his part of the country, I believe, is true, and true also of our part of the country, though he does not go far enough nor say quite enough to give one the right impression. Of course, I always remember that he has not been anywhere around Chesterfield, Baker Lake, or Repulse districts, so that I must not compare too closely. He speaks of people thinking always of the Arctic as such a barren place, when such is not the case on account of the beauties of the wild flowers which cover the whole country. In our districts there was absolutely no real soil of any description, just tundra in places. It was all rock with some patches of gravel. Some moss grew out of the gravel, the flowers did so also, and out of the crevices in the rock, and were beautiful and welcome indeed after ten months of winter. When the snow was disappearing in little patches they would begin to show. The first I found I fell down and worshipped; it looked like a little lost soul in such surroundings. But—and it is these little "buts" in life that make all the difference—these little flowers only bloom for between three weeks and a month. When we arrived in August already there wasn't a sign of one left anywhere, hence my great surprise the next year.

Stefansson also speaks of people thinking of the country as so silent, and says that with the hundreds of birds of all varieties it can never be that, but again he does

not say that their songs and calls only last about two weeks, during the mating season. We had a great many varieties around Chesterfield, but at the end of about two weeks not a sound could be heard. We walked, wind permitting, miles every day, and the awful silence is not to be described, my pen is quite inadequate. It seemed to descend upon us and enfold us, the grave itself could not be more quiet. Very occasionally there came the howl of a wolf or the bark of a fox. I would say sometimes to Walter, "I must scream"; it was to avoid the sensation of being buried alive. Always when I went alone I sang; no one but myself could hear, which was well for them, and it kept that feeling of suffocation from overcoming me. Surely the Owner of that "still, small voice" was caring for us then?

It was a great delight to find the wild birds' nests. The eider ducks, numbers of which remain all the year round on the sea at the edge of the ice floe on the Bay, would only let me come within a yard of their nests. They were off and out of sight if I approached nearer, but the sou'-sou'-wester ducks and the ptarmigan did not mind me at all. Every other day I went to visit some of them, taking them crumbs. They always let me pet and stroke them and take an egg out from under them to look at. Their nests were made on the hard ground, or in holes in the rock, with down plucked from their breasts. The smaller birds were not so tame, and tried always to lead us from their nests by pretending to have a broken wing or leg. Poor little helpless things, doing their best to protect their nests! The loons are the most remarkable of the Arctic birds, I think, for their weird and startling calls, sometimes a shriek, sometimes a wailing, and again, most weird of all, a shrill, distinct, uncanny laugh, which coming out of

the utter silence makes one's blood run cold for a moment. The terns, gulls, and sea-pigeons all made their nests on the gravel, also the kilderes. It was utterly impossible to find the kilderes' nests without carefully watching the old birds first.

On one of our walks we heard a great screaming of terns, so went to investigate. We saw dozens and dozens circling over a small island about sixty feet in circumference. We knew it was their nesting-place, and as we badly wanted some eggs, having had none, nor, indeed, scarcely anything fresh to eat for months, we tried so hard to reach the island, but the lake in which it lay happened to be very deep. We waded to our waists, but still could not reach it, so went back to the detachment and paddled around the coast in a canoe until the nearest point to the lake was reached. We then carried the canoe over the rock-strewn ground and finally reached the island, where we not only found dozens of terns' nests, but also loons', black and white gulls', sou'-sou'-westers', and a few eiders'. Great was our reward for the laborious work in reaching the island, for by taking an egg or two from each nest we had enough fresh food for several days, and such a treat the terns' eggs were. The other eggs are much too fishy to be enjoyed. As I pen these lines now in Winnipeg close to the river, I hear again the call of the terns on their migration North, and it recalls to me so vividly our life of privation there. Oh, how good the eggs were, being almost the only ones we could eat with relish! How I long to visit again that lone white land!

On another occasion, but in the autumn this time, we suddenly heard a deep droning sound. Any sound in the stillness startled us. We turned quickly and just in time to drop flat on the rocks, and over us, flying low,

passed hundreds of gulls on their migration South. Had we not dropped they would have struck us, they were so low.

The song birds had their nests under stones, and were equally hard to find. The phalarope, which I believe to be the first suffragette, was the prettiest and most interesting of all the birds, and nested in the shallow near the edge of a pond. They are fairly tame and very pretty, of a deep rust colour, beautifully formed. The female bird deposits the eggs in her nest, and while her husband patiently sat upon his little nest his pretty and care-free wife enjoyed a curious whirligig swim like a water dance with the other wives in the neighbourhood before they decided that Northern life was too tame for them and departed for the South. The male hatches them out, educates them in the way they should go, and then takes them with him South. A very splendid way of managing, I believe, and a pity not adopted by parents other than the birds. Cinders was very fond of the phalarope, and knew always when there were any about. He followed them around and around their little ponds. To other birds he paid no attention at all.

Stefansson also speaks of the wonderful comfort of the igloo. The real comfort and warmth of the snow-huts is true, but what is that comfort when balanced with a hard, long day's trip over rocks and hummocks of ice, where the sledge has to be assisted over and around every obstacle, often in the face of a driving ground blizzard, of which every particle of snow is like a needle, or of wind so strong and keen it cuts like a knife or burns like fire? An igloo is made from large blocks of hard snow, cut with a knife, and built in the form of a bee-hive. The builder, working from the inside, places and fits

CHESTERFIELD. MYSELF AT THE ENTRANCE OF AN IGLOO.

facing page 168.

the blocks spirally until at the top he fits the last block, the keystone. All the blocks are cut out of what would be the floor of the igloo, thus giving more height inside. The igloos are made in various sizes according to requirements, and if one is to be used for some time a block of ice is inserted for a window. When completed, they are very solid, and one could climb on them without breaking through. The temperature inside must always be below freezing, and some of the coast natives burn a primitive lamp, using seal oil, and moss for wick. The only ventilation is from a small hole pushed through the top, which is usually kept plugged with a piece of deerskin and only opened occasionally. The entrance is closed with a block of snow. Wind we thought we had experienced in Alberta, but it was as the breath of angels, compared with this, which seemed the breath of the evil spirits of all ages. I could not stand against it. One day it literally picked me up and carried me until a timely snowbank stopped me, or I am sure I would be travelling yet with Jack Frost or Santa Claus. If it blew for more than one day, then we knew that it would continue for three, six, or nine days, and during that time we could not go out. Even the Esquimos stayed in their igloos. After travelling against a wind of similar strength, and a very low temperature, and then waiting for an igloo to be built, who would not think its shelter real comfort and warmth, even tropical?

Almost anything to eat would taste good after a long, cold day's trip, as no midday meal is eaten, it being impossible to light a primus stove in the open. The Esquimos usually do the cooking on these trips, and their ways are not very appetizing. For instance, if they are going to heat up some prepared beans or meat balls, which I always

made ahead of time, they would chew up some deer fat, put it into the frying-pan first, and then heat whatever was wanted. After once experiencing this method Walter carried his own frying-pan.

A few Esquimo families arrive at the coast in the spring, having travelled several hundreds of miles to be present when the yearly steamer arrives. They bring their winter's catch of fur, which they trade for tea, sugar, tobacco, powder, and lead, with which they make ammunition. They are very fond of tea, sugar, and tobacco; the latter they mix with dried moss to make it last longer, and it is a most evil smelling mixture. They assist in unloading the steamer, and then they are off again and not seen for another year. They are all very dirty, and the smell of seal and walrus, their staple diet, is almost overpowering. The babies are bright-eyed little things, and are carried quite nude on their mothers' backs, a pouch being formed in the mothers' coats for this purpose, and a strip of walrus hide tied around the waist to prevent the baby falling through to the ground. What appears to be a bag at the back of an Esquimo woman's coat is there for the purpose of being used to protect her head and face from the wind, as she wears no head-dress, and her "overnight bag" is pockets at the ankle of her outside deerskin stockings.

Every now and again the babies are heaved out and the pouches are given a spring cleaning. On such occasions a baby is set down anywhere, sometimes on the snow, and before the mother puts it back she just glances over it to see that it is not frozen anywhere. No wonder they are all so hardy and can live in the cheerless igloos through the endless winters with never-ending blizzards and gales, their only light and warmth being an ice window

and an Esquimo lamp. These lamps are made of potstone, found many miles away, and have been acquired by the natives through barter, I believe, and are valued highly by their owners. They are about eighteen inches long, made in the shape of a crescent. The dried moss, used for a wick, is placed all along the straight edge, and the seal oil is flicked up to it with a piece of bone by the woman of the family, who becomes quite expert in keeping a good flame on the moss, which is difficult to do. In their stone pots it would take longer than a day to really cook anything over the flame.

Their whole life, indeed, is one long and constant struggle against Nature. The coast natives are slightly better off than the inland tribes, as they can nearly always get a seal, a meal of which is usually partaken of at once in its raw state, the liver being the choice bit. The inland tribes have to depend entirely upon the caribou, which is eaten raw, and their only drink is cold water, but as they have no vegetables, and only a few moss berries, which they do not eat, the raw meat keeps them free from scurvy. Raw moose meat and raw caribou are good anyway and so no hardship! And yet with such a life the majority of them are good-humoured and philosophical, always saying, no matter how bad the day's hunt may have been, "Oh, well, to-morrow we may catch something," and perhaps "to-morrow" may be just as barren of any luck for them as the previous day. They are very slow and deliberate in their movements, time being of no value to them. They work very hard during the unloading of the ship each year and always cheerfully. I think their hunting and trapping, though few of them trap, is very hard work, too, in all kinds of weather, with seldom enough food to keep them going. With rare exceptions,

they are very honest and have a great regard for the truth; it is almost impossible ever to get a definite "Yes" or "No" from them on any subject unless they are absolutely positive of what they say. They will not commit themselves and then perhaps be found wrong. They do not seem to understand the changing of one's mind; that seems like an untruth to them; we had, therefore, ever to be on guard. To us, who always kept ourselves occupied, they would seem lazy, but what could they do? Only a suit of clothes a year to make, making and mending of the shoes and implements for hunting. The beautifully beaded suits which some of the women wear are very often handed down from mother to daughter. They are made in such a way that the bead-work can be removed in sections and put on another suit. The patterns in the bead-work are of articles which they use, such as their lamps, knives, etc., and the teeth of caribou are fastened on the fringes of the clothing, the more teeth the better, as it shows the husband to be a mighty hunter.

They are not by any means a good-looking people. The full, "moon-shaped" face is thought by themselves a sign of beauty. Their bodies are much lighter in colour than the Indians, and cleaner, as they wear only the deer-skins, which are removed each night, whereas an Indian wears white man's clothes, and sometimes, I am afraid, they are worn until they drop off. I think, all things considered, they are harmless, cheerful people, and a great example to many of us in this acquisitive age.

I spent hours in their igloos trying to talk with them. One day as I went into one, and sat down, as I thought, on an old bundle, the Esquimos asked me if I had seen the old woman. I said, "No, who and where is she?" They pointed to where I was sitting, and there actually

under me in a sack was a tiny old woman, the oldest in the country. When I jumped up, quite startled at the thought of having sat upon her, they pulled back the top of the sack. I never hope to see such a sight again. She was deaf and blind, toothless, and dried up to such an extent that I could not have told her from a mummy, quite naked and brown as dead leaves. She had no flesh at all, just bones, and wrinkles, grey straggling hair sticking out all over her head and into her eyes and mouth, and red, red eyes with dropped lower lids, a sickening sight, but human, made in God's image. How can we understand? Had this family been travelling instead of being employed in the settlement, no doubt they would have left the old woman to die.

It is, indeed, beyond my power to describe the crushed feeling it gave me to see them sitting in an igloo doing nothing. They are certainly like the old man (I have forgotten who he was) who said, "I mostly sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits." It is the latter case with them most of the time.

Of course, the sanitation among the Esquimos is *nil*. There is no thought of such a thing. They also have certain habits in which they so exactly resemble the animals, most embarrassing to a white woman when out among them or travelling with them, until they learn that certain rules must be kept. No man, either native or white man, cares to have white women in the country. They find them a nuisance in every way, and they themselves not as free to come and go and do as they please, as otherwise they would be. Their years away from all the influence of home life have made them what they are. The North brings out the worst of a man, not the best, notwithstanding anything that Oliver Curwood, the United States

novelist on Canadian Northern life, might say to the contrary.

All the Esquimos in the Chesterfield area are used to rifles, which they have obtained from the Company and whalers by trading, but the Esquimos north of Repulse Bay are still using bows and arrows. The natives claim that the white man's gun has frightened all the game away, and that now the caribou cannot be hunted with bows and arrows, as they keep too far distant, and also they claim that the bell at the mission, which is rung many times a day, and which can be heard by humans for a distance of six miles, keeps the caribou from coming nearer the settlement, as, of course, they can hear for a much greater distance. I do know that that winter the caribou kept very far inland, and, with the exception of the two small ones previously mentioned, which were brought in at Christmas, we had not been able to find any, and so we were a long time without fresh meat. We were occasionally able to get a little from our old caches, which we made in the autumn, but they were far away. Personally, I found the seal and walrus very good eating. The walrus I like the better of the two. It is a very dark rich-looking meat and very fat, but really quite good, especially the flappers of the young walrus, but the rest of our party would not eat it. The natives who have been working for white people for any length of time will not eat it, but I consider that such natives should go hungry, because they had previously lived on it all their lives and found it good. It is another example of how the white man's way of living ruins the natives.

One of their children's delicacies, and, I believe, their greatest of all treats, was eating what we know as the warble fly grub. The larva of the fly in the form of a

A WHITE WHALE AND THE OLD VETERAN.

OOG-JUG (GROUND SEAL) AT THE EDGE OF A FLOE.

facing page 174.

large grub is found adhering to the inside of the skin, next to the flesh, along the back of the caribou, and grows to the size of a lima bean. It is largest at spring-time, when it is just about to develop into a warble fly and push through the skin. It is more like a chiclet than anything I know. When bitten it is full of milky substance, and they say about the same taste. It is the only native dish I have been unable to taste. When the caribou is skinned the children stand around waiting, and then literally dig into the skin until their hands and faces and deerskins are covered with blood; but, oh, their smiles! They are so fond of these grubs, they much prefer them to our sweets, excepting the natives who have worked for the white people and are a little accustomed to sugar. The Esquimos care for neither sugar nor salt at first, and I never met but one Esquimo who would take salt with his food.

They are very unkind and cruel to some orphans—that is, to those children who have lost all their relatives and whom they have been forced to adopt. The children whom they willingly adopt they seem very fond of. There are no bachelors or old maids among them. The men must have someone to sew for them and the women must have someone to hunt for them, and so they are frequently promised in marriage before birth or when very young. The old people, too, must have someone to look after them when their hunting days are over, and so they often adopt the child of a family which is on the move and does not want to keep the taboos which are necessary after the birth of a child. The woman doing the adopting takes the child as her own and keeps all the taboos as though she were its real mother, and so both the families and the spirits are satisfied.

The men usually have one or more wives; one or all are likely to be traded or discarded at any time if they become sick and useless. Sometimes a wife is exchanged or loaned from time to time like a book from a circulating library. To us it is a most lamentable state of affairs. They have no marriage laws, nor ceremonies. Moral conditions among them are really very bad, but I would rather say they were unmoral than immoral; for them, relationships which we consider immoral are not wrong. They seem not to have any sense of beauty of Nature. They were much amused when I admired the small, lovely, little flowers, which they themselves never seem to see. They are very cruel to the small birds, the children taking a delight in maiming the mother bird with stones and killing the young birds by taking them out of their nests.

Except that they could talk, I found the Esquimos, indeed, more like animals than human beings, but they are to be pitied and helped in every way possible, not censured. Though the priests have endeavoured to help them, it must be remembered that it is a very slow process, and almost impossible to change the older natives. The effect of such help will not be shown until after the next generation. All that can be done is to try to teach them what is right. How difficult it is to teach and explain our "God" to them, a God of love who cares for all His creatures, so that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge, and yet numbers of natives have died from starvation, either from not being able to hunt for so long a time or from scarcity of game or lack of ammunition.

Where the natives have come in contact with the whalers, who do not now enter the Bay to exploit the

country, they were taught nothing but wickedness. A good example of this occurred not long since. A half-breed was overheard telling a deliberate falsehood, and, when remonstrated with, he was quite bold, and said, "Me all the same white man, me big feet, me plenty lie, me all the same white man." All Esquimos have remarkably small feet, and as this man was a half-breed he had more the feet of a white man and thought he was one and could do as he thought they all did. It is most regrettable that the examples of some white men have been of such a character, and it has not been an enviable position for us to fall heirs to. Of course, we can imagine the class of white men who would be on whaling ships, as a general rule.

It is generally known, I think, that Denmark will not allow any traders or strangers of any kind into Greenland except by a permit, and very few permits are issued; in fact, Knud Rasmussen and his partner are, I believe, the only outsiders allowed to run a trading-post in Greenland besides the Government's trading-posts. Strict supervision is accorded all expeditions, and yet we are allowing everybody and anybody into our Northland, and, coming as guests, they are entirely unmindful of the obligations of guests, but go the limit in exploiting the land to which they have won such easy access. It surely is time we took thought for our Northern inheritance, and especially to these native people, they who have pluckily come through so many generations, fighting every day and all day just to live. Still they fight on, but now has come to them the white face, and they watch us, curiously, scornfully—wistfully. Even their habit of sometimes killing the sick and old, and the babies when travelling, can be understood by those who have lived among them. The old

proverb, "*Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*," is what fits here. Oh! the stark misery of their lives.

It should always be remembered, with almost the single exceptions or Hubert Darrell and Hornby, two Englishmen who travelled far and wide in the Arctic at different times and quite alone, and both of whom met a tragic end—Darrell, I believe, from an attack by a polar bear and Hornby from starvation—that all white people in the far North are dependent upon these poor people for guidance to their desired destinations and for game by which to live. I consider that they will prove a very valuable asset to us in the years to come, since, with the Hudson Bay Railway completed, there will be many more exploration parties going further North in search of the many minerals. I do not wish to belittle white men, for, from my observation, those with average intelligence can learn anything that an Esquimo may know, but as the Esquimos have spent their lives hunting, and living under the severest conditions, they are a necessity to the white man when travelling until he gains experience.

ESQUIMOS AT CHESTERFIELD.

facing page 211.

CHAPTER XIV

TABOOS OF THE ESQUIMOS

THE Esquimos believe that they originally came to their present lands from another country by the help of a giant, who stood with one foot on either side of the ocean. The good natives he lifted over and the bad ones he drowned. It is a curious fact that the *Chipewyans* (Indians) who inhabit the bush country further south have a similar belief, except that they say that the giant lay down and the Indians walked over his body. The Esquimos describe the country, including the mountains, they passed through on their journey. This story is told from one generation to another.

Dealing with the Esquimos was, as a whole, very difficult, for they are a most superstitious people. Their taboos are legion. It is no exaggeration when I say there are hundreds of them. They have taboos for everything—talking, eating, drinking, waking, and sleeping—and the breaking of any taboo is supposed to bring disaster. When a native will not do something there is no obvious reason for him not to do, a taboo is the cause of it, and the sooner white men understand these conditions and do not force them to do things when they are unwilling, the better for all concerned. The ordinary everyday precepts which any decent living white man obeys are put down by the Esquimos as "White Man's Rules," and in his mind are just equivalent to his own taboos.

They have among themselves what they call *antikoots,* which means "medicine men," or "conjurors"; sometimes the conjurors are men and sometimes women. I

think that perhaps the latter predominate. Frequently meetings are held in igloos, and the antikoot is called upon to invoke the spirits to answer questions, to tell where lost articles will be found, when other natives are expected to arrive in camp, or to give the reason why hunting has not been good, and all manner of ridiculous things. When a member of the tribe is sick, the antikoot is called upon to ask the spirits to make him well and to tell the reason he is sick. This is when many taboos are made, for the antikoot will say that the spirit says such and such a thing must be done. I might say that this is all done by the antikoot working himself or herself up into a passion and then appearing to be in a trance and taking a trip to the moon, and when in this state he or she will talk to the spirit or spirits and repeat the answers.

I could have and would very much like to have attended one of these séances, but since we were there, not only to uphold the law, but to show by example the right way, and considering also that we tried to tell them that spirit talks could not be, it did not seem proper for me to attend. I would like to mention that on Walter's trip into the interior after the murderer, one of his natives had a piece of sinew tied round his waist on which was hanging a short piece of deerskin, a piece of cotton, and a piece of wood about three inches long and shaped like a boat. He wore this all the time, and it was afterwards learned that his wife was an antikoot, and that wearing these charms would ensure good hunting, the finding of a boat if they were caught in open water, also a sail. Before Walter returned to the inland trading-post where the antikoot lived, she had foretold his coming, though he had not been expected for weeks.

These antikoots are the brainy ones of the tribe, for,

of course, they are fooling the natives, and they know the natives are being fooled, but they have to be clever to keep it up. They are set apart for their profession in early youth and undergo a long training. They are all-powerful in their tribe, and they get the lion's share of anything and everything that comes into camp.

I will quote a few of the common taboos. When it is believed that one of the tribe is dying, he is taken out of the igloo or tent, for if he dies in the tent or igloo then all the articles in that igloo, including the tent, have to be buried with him. If a sledge is used on which to haul the dead body, it is never used again, but is left at the grave. Sometimes a dying person is driven on a sledge to where he is to be buried and there wrapped in deerskins, and when he dies the body is covered with piles of stones. The custom used to be that the dogs belonging to the native were taken to his grave and shot, but since dogs have been so scarce, models of them are made of ivory from walrus tusks and these are left at the grave. The spirit of the departed can make them into large, live dogs when he wants to do so. Tobacco, matches, and a pipe are always left at the grave, and a little food, and no native can leave the camp for five days. Sledges are set up on end on top of the igloos for five days to inform incoming natives that a death has occurred, for if they come in they cannot leave the camp for five days. The spirit of the departed is supposed to be hovering around the camp for that length of time, and no whip must be used to the dogs in case the spirit is struck.

All those in camp fast for one day after a death. The native men taking part in a funeral must not do any work for a month, and the women must carry a snow-knife in their hands for five days after the funeral.

Any native man taking part in the burial of another must not work with iron, bone, etc., for a year. Each tribe has its own particular material on which the man must not work.

An Esquimo and his family, after a long absence, returned to his mother. She had thought him dead, and though he was a grown man she nursed him, the idea being that by doing so she had received him back body and spirit.

When a boy kills his first seal, the parents choose an old woman to make rules for all his future hunts. She either takes the clothes of the boy and puts them around the seal, or skins the seal and puts the naked boy in the skin, and the kind of instrument she uses to cut up the seal must be used by the boy all his life for the same purpose.

There were numerous Esquimo graves in our district. The body is first sewn up in deerskins and then covered with stones. Usually a hole in the rock pile can be found where the wolves and foxes have been breaking in, and the body can be seen. We found one body turned on its side and slightly raised. This would show that it had been buried alive, as a body is always buried on its back or in a sitting position. It is a custom of the natives, when they believe a person to be at the point of death and they are already travelling or about to start, to bury the person at once, often with the consent of the dying person, so that they are not delayed the five days mentioned heretofore, and sometimes the dying even commit suicide to hasten the departure of the rest of the family in pursuit of game. Such heroism!

Mouths of wolves are sewn on the clothes of small girls to ensure them having an easy time if they ever have a

child. Weasels are worn on men's clothes to make them quick in warding off evil. No least particle of steam must ever be allowed to escape from the igloo during the fox season or the hunt will be poor. Ptarmigan legs are sewn on children's trousers that they may become good runners.

For one month before her confinement a women is left alone. No other native will eat or drink with her, neither will they use her kettle, nor cup, nor dishes. She always keeps a particular bone of a seal in her tea-kettle, otherwise the child would not live. After the birth all the dishes and the kettle are discarded. There is supposed to be a spirit hovering around all the time, and if the family do not possess two kettles, occasionally one of the family will hide the kettle in a sack, so that the spirit cannot see it, and then take it to another igloo. By doing this the native thinks he has deceived the spirit, at the same time they would not touch the kettle with their hands.

Should a birth take place in a camp within four days after the death of a native the child must take the name of the deceased native, and it is supposed to be ruled by the spirit of that native until it is ten or twelve years of age. During such time everything is done to please the child, and it is never punished for anything it does, because it would be punishing the spirit.

The coast native women must never look at a ship until after it has anchored. When it is first sighted they must always turn their backs to it. What control the curious ones must have over themselves!

A man who kills a polar bear must not work for a month afterwards, neither shall he cut up meat nor handle a snow-knife. The skin of the bear must not be taken into a camp if a woman is sick there. Deer meat cannot

be taken into an igloo through the proper entrance, but it must be taken through a hole cut in the wall. Deer meat and seal meat cannot both be kept in an igloo together, neither may they be cooked in the same vessels. Sealskin must not be taken into an igloo at any time, nor can deer-skins be taken to a tent. When on hunting expeditions deer are killed, an offering is made to the "spirits" in the shape of a piece of hair, bone, flesh, with blood of the deer, which is left in the corner of the igloo. This will ensure the hunters seeing plenty of deer on the trip. Evidently it does not always have the desired effect, as they often go hungry. Again, the women must never eat deer tongues. That seems to me to be a wise taboo on the part of the men, as it ensures them always having that delicacy for themselves. The women must not eat the eggs of wild birds until they have had a child. I think some of the "conjurors" must have been clever and artful. Women suffrage has certainly not arrived yet among their people.

Neither may a woman sew while her husband is out hunting, or he may meet with an accident. On one occasion, in the spring of the year, when a man was out hunting at the edge of the floe, a pan of ice broke off and he was carried out to sea. Fortunately, he had some food with him and was able to get a seal, which kept him alive until the ice-pan drifted into Marble Island, but the woman was blamed because she had been seen sewing.

A very funny incident occured at Marble Island, which is only forty miles from Chesterfield. Mitchell, one of the Company's men, was landing there with some natives. Now, according to the Esquimos' tradition, Marble Island was not always where it is, it suddenly appeared there out of the nowhere. Consequently, in their view, on the

CHESTERFIELD. NATIVES. WEARING GOGGLES. WITH A SAILING SLEDGE.

facing page 134.

arrival of Esquimos on the island, the spirits must be propitiated, which is done by everyone lying flat and crawling and worming their way ashore for a hundred yards or so. As soon as the natives with Mitchell stepped ashore they dropped flat and proceeded as mentioned. Mitchell did not know anything of these superstitions, and thought they had sighted deer, and, of course, did likewise. Then they all got up and walked as usual, he looking and asking all the time for the *took-too* (deer). It was not until he returned to the post that he learned the reason for their crawling, and how good they thought he was for doing as they did. They did *not* hear his remarks.

It was at Marble Island that Sergeant Donaldson had lost his life some years prior to our arrival. He and Corporal Reeves were hunting walrus for dog feed when a walrus attacked the boat, its tusk, of course, piercing it and causing it to sink. Corporal Reeves only just managed to make shore where the natives had been left making a cache. They pulled him out, and to save him put their dry clothes on him in the place of his frozen ones. Sergeant Donaldson was never seen again. I wonder if Canada realizes the heroic lives the mounted police have led and are leading.

Marble Island must have been where it is for at least one hundred years, as Admiral Parry, the English navigator, who sailed to that district in 1822 in search of the North-West Passage, mentions it. I read his most intensely interesting book in 1922, exactly one hundred years after his trip, and the conditions at Chesterfield now are identically the same as when he wrote of it. Every superstition he mentions the Esquimos still have, and their mode of life is also the same.

Tattooing is not now generally practised among the

Esquimos, though all the older women are tattooed. It is beautifully done in the form of uniform lines all over their bodies and faces. It is pricked in, and the black from their lamps used for the dye.

When an Esquimo is leaving on a trip for the first time to the white man's country—for example, to Churchill with the mail packet—as he drives off he calls out the names of the wives he has had at different times, and the wife he has at the time replies with the names of her different husbands. This ensures a safe return for the traveller.

There were some old Esquimo ruins quite close to us. They were in the form of stone buildings. We had the advantage of having a member of Rasmussen's expedition with us. He was an expert in such matters, and so we gained a great deal of information which otherwise we would not have known. It seems that these old stone houses are at least three hundred years old, and are what is called "between season houses," because they were built for use between seasons, when it was too cold for skin tents and when there was not enough snow with which to build igloos. The stone houses were just walls built of pieces of rock, with skins stretched over the top, and they were very small.

CHAPTER XV

THE DOGS—MY GREATEST FRIENDS

We divided our year at Chesterfield into seasons, each of which we looked forward to as a milestone. After the ship, it was the hunting and the freeze-up, then it was the trapping, then Christmas and New Year, and so on until the time to look for the ship once more. When the second Christmas came the priests and Company's men were to have Christmas dinner with us again. On Christmas morning, 1923, the worst blizzard of the year was blowing. We could not see twenty feet in any direction. The priests went a long way out of their way before reaching us and were an hour late. The Esquimos employed by the Company had gone to their igloos, and could not be called. We waited over an hour, and, finally, sent one of our natives for them. The storm became worse instead of better, and so they remained overnight until the afternoon of the next day when they could return, but we spent a very pleasant afternoon and evening, and how welcome the Christmas parcels were, though the menu was practically the same as the previous year. The only change possible was to have the food cooked a little differently.

Weather permitting, Walter and I walked every day to visit our traps, a long, cold walk, but outdoor exercise was most necessary for our health. The setting of these traps was a very delicate operation: first the chain of the trap, with a piece of wood through the ring, is buried—this acts as an anchor for the trap—then a hole is cut in the snow deep enough to hold the trap with jaws open, and

just below the level of the surrounding snow; then a block of snow is cut, large enough to cover the trap, which is shaved and scraped down until it is almost transparent over the plate of the trap; that was always my work, and many a time, with all my care, just as I had finished it, the point of my knife would push through, rendering the setting useless, as the snow, being so fine, would sift through and fill the hole, so it had to be done all over again. A few pieces of blubber are scattered around and a larger piece placed securely between two rocks close to the trap. As soon as the fox tries to get this its foot breaks through the snow and springs the trap. We never were able to find any young white foxes. They make good pets, though we had a young red fox at The Pas, such a little beauty with his long, silky brush.

On one occasion when visiting our traps a blizzard came up just as we turned to come home. It is utterly impossible to face such storms and equally impossible to keep the eyes open, the fine snow cuts the eyeballs. We could just stumble blindly on, every now and then realizing we were going wrong and trying to get around again into the wind. For one infinitesimal moment we were completely lost; it was the most awful feeling I ever had, I was just panic-stricken, for we knew what the consequences would be. It just proved that even on a fine day it was not safe to go a few miles without a native in case of sudden storms.

During the next week the priests sent over and asked us to go over for a game of bridge and have dinner. I had a feeling that day that we should not go. I did not mention it to Walter, for, as I said before, a change of cooking and a game of cards was always a pleasant break in the daily round, and he had great faith in what he

called my "second sight," so off we went. About six o'clock up came another blizzard. We hoped it would be over before we left. About nine an Esquimo came to the mission, a visiting one. However, we kept him to take us home, ours being away hunting, but just as we were ready to go, Parker, Maria's husband, came. She had sent him, as he had just returned, and well for us she had. We left the mission at ten o'clock. It was eleven-thirty before we reached our post, a distance of a mile, the worst mile I ever travelled. Walter and Parker were assisting me and we had three lanterns, which went out one by one. Those who are superstitious of three lights will say that is why we had the hard trip. The other Esquimo was leading the way and kept going wrong, taking us out to sea. Parker kept shouting to him, and finally left me and went ahead. Not one of us could draw a breath against such a wind. We were puffing and blowing, as though we had been running a mile, and we were all badly frozen, my face much the worst, as the wind blew my hood straight back and I could not hold it forward. Walter said it was the last visit he would ever make at night, and it was. Had it not been for Parker we could never have reached the post alive.

As a young girl I used to believe that Captain Oates, of Scott's expedition, was the greatest hero of the age. I believe so now more than ever, since I have experienced myself what he went out of his igloo into, a sick man to be beaten and whipped and torn about without the faintest chance of life, that others might carry on, for had they waited for him to recover they would all have died. A hero indeed!

During this second winter Walter was investigating a suspected murder case. The investigation proved that the

man was insane, but it was a most interesting case. He chose as his first victim his little son. His wife, in attempting to save the child, was stabbed in the abdomen. She walked six miles in the middle of the night to the next encampment to get help to overpower the man. A walk of six miles under such conditions would be almost killing at any time, but when it is remembered that it was over all uneven ground where no two steps were alike and where she often had to jump from one rock to another, it is a miracle she ever reached there alive, and during all that walk she was holding the open wound, being unable to get the omentum back into place. When she had sent the brothers back to look after her husband she attended to herself, but being unable to replace the omentum she tied it around with a piece of sinew, when in time it just dried and sloughed off; such is their power of endurance. As the husband had previously shown signs of insanity, his brothers wished to kill him, but before doing so it was necessary for them to obtain their mother's consent, she being the head of the family. This she refused to give at first, but her sons argued that their brother if allowed to live might yet kill other members of the tribe, so the poor mother reluctantly consented, and the man was shot, this being their only means of saving other members of the tribe from injury or death. Our thoughts in such a case could only be " Judge not, that ye be not judged."

This same woman came into Chesterfield late one evening in a very bad storm. She had just had a baby and so was not allowed to enter another Esquimo's igloo, neither could she walk where others had walked, etc., and the storm was too bad to build a fresh igloo for her. We suggested that she should remain in the carpenter's shop, but, of course, people having walked there, that would

not do, and all the time we were trying to find a place for her she was standing out in the blizzard with the young child on her back. Finally, they asked if she might go in Cinder's igloo. We gave ready permission, being thankful to get her out of the storm. She had to walk through the passages to reach the igloo, as we had built it outside of the north door of the building with no outside exit. The drifts piled high over it and over the house, and so it was dog-proof and safe for Cindy, but the natives were much upset that she should walk through the passages and expected something awful to happen to her then and there. As soon as she and her husband got into the igloo I sent out a good hot dinner for her and her husband, with a pot of tea, but she could neither eat anything which I had cooked nor drink the tea, which had been made from water boiled on my stove. The husband soon finished both portions. She must wait for water to boil over her own lamp and could eat only hard-tack, so both she and the baby were practically starved.

Poor, poor things, never in my life again shall I be discontented after seeing how they live! They start out on a whole winter's trip with never an ounce of food on their sledges for either themselves or their dogs, and must just wait until they come up with the caribou or an occasional hare. When the ice is gone it is not quite so difficult, for they can now and then get fish.

For two weeks of the so-called summer we had a plague of mosquitoes, literally in millions. It was impossible to go out with them about, even using nets; there was the swarm of them around our heads in dense clouds. I would run home almost whimpering, only my pride kept me from crying outright, they were so awful. We fairly breathed mosquitoes. When having the barrel filled with

water it was necessary to keep the windows open, as we took the pails in through the window to the barrel, which stood beside it, and after it was filled I actually swept the mosquitoes up in the dust-pan. Fortunately, they only lasted two weeks instead of three months, as in the bush country, and we did not have sand-flies or bulldogs. The latter are well named. They are black, larger quite a bit than the bluebottle, and they take a real bite. When they were bad in the bush it was always easy to get a moose, as moose would come down to the river and stand up to their necks in the water to be free from flies.

The best time of the year was when most of the snow had gone and the birds were nesting. We took long, long walks each day, visiting the birds, and again it was time to look for the ship's arrival and speculate the day and hour and whom it would bring. The boys had even the days counted and, finally, early in the morning, again far off on the horizon Walter saw what at first we all declared to be an iceberg, but the Esquimos knew at once it was the steamer, and again excitement reigned and the glasses were out. It was over two hours before it was near enough for us to see anyone on board. Then we could see uniforms and tried so hard to pick out a woman, which we finally did, and poor Maria was so glad she would have someone to talk to again. At last they were on shore and I went to meet them—Staff-Sergeant Clay and his wife. When Mrs. Clay had told me how much she had disliked the idea of coming, and now that she had arrived how much more she disliked the place and that she was afraid of the Esquimos, the pleasure of my going was spoiled. I could hardly bear to leave her behind, feeling as she did, and the whole of the following winter she seemed to haunt me. I think we both must have had a premoni-

WALTER LOOKING FOR THE SHIP.

facing page 192.

tion of the awful tragedy which was so soon to take place.

The ship remained four days. It was hard saying good-bye to the poor things whom we had lived so close to for two years, and of some of whom we were very fond. Maria wanted so badly to come with me, but it was too great a responsibility for me to take her from her own people to such a perfectly different life. Knowing our life there, she naturally thought it would be the same outside, and I could not explain the difference, besides, I was sure that she could never endure the change of climate, but I wept when I left her. It was a sad time, but over at last, and we left in another gale, some of my favourite dogs coming right down to the water's edge, where we embarked in lash-boats for the ship.

I cannot close this chapter of the Arctic without some mention of the dogs. As always, they were my greatest pleasure and of such interest. For hours I have watched and studied them. We had about thirty at that time. As long as I could look out of the windows I studied their habits.

They were for all the world like schoolboys. There was the bully, the one that was always skylarking and cared for none of the others, and, of course, the leader of the pack to whom the others all gave way. "Ox-shoot" his name was, meaning "strong," and he was strong in mind and body. I never saw him during the whole of our stay there look at another dog. He absolutely ignored them, and his every move was watched by the entire pack. They would come to him singly or in couples, lick his mouth, cut all sorts of capers, whimper, lie down on their backs and try to make up to him by every means they knew. When their importunities became too

pressing he would calmly reach down and give them a bite, stand over them a moment growling, and then walk majestically off, midst much howling on the part of the others.

At feeding time the scene was wild beyond words. Wolves could not be worse; in fact, I always said I would rather meet a pack of wolves than a pack of huskies when they were on a hunting trip. They were fed twice or three times a week when they were not working. It was the exciting time of the day. Every dog was in a dozen fights before they were finished. Ox-shoot, of course, had as much as he wanted, first and always, no dog ever attempted to fight him. He got the first piece of blubber always. If he liked the look of another dog's better he left his and took it, and apart from a yelp no attempt was made by the dog to keep it, he just went after some other dog and had a fight. The younger dogs had a bad time, nipped by every other dog in turn, and the row, it was deafening! If anyone had slipped and fallen among them at that time they could not have lasted ten minutes. Sometimes I have watched Ox-shoot sleeping peacefully with his vassals lying at a safe distance from him. He would slowly stretch, survey the pack through narrow slits of eyes, get slowly up, with every dog's eye upon him, stretch again and walk slowly off, with every dog up and after him, and sometimes they would be gone two weeks. They were off hunting, and at these times I did not care to go many miles from the post.

When we left for our daily walk at times when they were all about the house, I had to hold Cinders high over my head. They would be jumping up at him. In the light of after events I have wondered often since how and why we were spared. They all seemed to vary in size and

colour, though all were beautiful, with the sharp velvet-lined ears, and the full, bushy tails carried high over their backs in walking, and used as a shield for their heads and faces when lying curled up in a storm. Sometimes they would be completely covered over with snow; in fact, we would never see them until it was over, they would just shake themselves out. They never seem to feel the cold. When petted from the time they are puppies they are most affectionate and faithful and obedient; in fact, no dog could be better as a companion. I have had many, each dog in the train of the last ones we had in the bush country was a pet and knew our every word. Kindness does not interfere with their speed. That same team was the fastest in the country, and I believe still holds the record for certain distances. But both Esquimos and Indians are cruel to their dogs and never affectionate, and so, of course, their dogs never expect anything but a blow, from which they are ever trying to escape. One of our natives had a dog of his own which stayed always at his igloo. Each time Nou-vee-a started for his igloo the dog came to meet him, wagging his tail and never, even once, did I see Nou-vee-a pat him or speak to him. To me such devotion was very sad, and why it lived on is a mystery.

If the Company's dogs passed within half a mile all our dogs would fly for them, and then such a battle royal! It was dreadful, dreadful! During the second year we bought a dog from the Southampton natives, a fine, large, strong dog, and a fearful life he led. He was a stranger, and a stranger he remained. He dare not step a foot from the platform of our house or they were all upon him, and at feeding time he remained afar off until they were all well engrossed in their meal. Then the native would throw a piece of blubber and he would venture near.

Being an outcast among his own made him more friendly to us, though, poor thing, he never knew what to expect.

They are all strong and mostly willing workers, though there is always to be found one using his brains instead of his muscles, trotting along in the traces, tail up, but with a very loose collar, pulling not a pound, while the others do his share. About a hundred pounds to a dog is allowed over ordinary trails; always, too, there will be one which yells whatever move the driver makes. I suppose he thinks if he yells first his master will think he has hit him and so not try again. Then there is ever the bully, the one that pounces on any of his mates if the mate has got tangled up in the traces and is helpless. He will not fight when the dog is free, but just when he cannot help himself.

Frequently, when the dogs are on a long trip they suffer from sore feet, caused by the snow getting between their toes and forming into balls of ice; this particularly refers to dogs with a hairy foot, and is more common in the bush country. The ice-balls rub the skin raw and cause the dog to go lame. To overcome this it is necessary to use dog-shoes, which can be made of heavy blanket material called "duffle," or deerskin, sewn in the form of a bag and tied above the paw. These must be changed often and dried, and fresh ones put on.

As I have repeated many times, dogs are such a joy to me, and, if studied, they are all wonderfully intelligent, but of those I have known, I do think, for unadulterated brains, Cinders takes first prize for an escapade which he had in Toronto.

"OCH-SHUTE" WITH "THE BULLY" (CENTRE BACKGROUND).

facing page 196.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LONG TRIP SOUTH

I BELIEVE I slept the whole way to Churchill, storm or no. At Churchill we remained over a week, waiting for the schooner from Nelson with the fur. It was a deadly monotonous week; daily we took walks on shore visiting the old police headquarters. It seems such a shame to see them empty, also the old Fort Prince of Wales. On one of these walks we were surrounded and almost literally eaten alive by black flies, our very first experience of them in all our Northern travel. It was as though a score of needles were being pushed into our flesh at different places at the same time, and as for poor Cinders, there was not a quarter of an inch of his little body that had not a fly on it, with head buried in his skin. We rushed on board. For half an hour I worked over him pulling off the flies, each one of which left a drop of blood, until he was a red dog instead of white, and it was over six weeks before his little body was healed.

From Churchill we sailed south again to the very southern end of James' Bay to Charleston Island, the depot for the Company's James' Bay posts, where we remained another week. The country there was thickly wooded. Oh, the joy of seeing trees and grass and flowers again and even berries! We went ashore several times each day, and how we did enjoy those wild berries! All the time we were gathering and eating them Cinders was eating grass. When he found a tuft he liked he never moved from it. He looked up occasionally to see where we were and went on eating until finished, then looked

for another. He enjoyed it quite as much as we did the berries.

From Charleston Island we were to go another hundred miles to the mouth of the Moose River by a small eighty-ton schooner, a trip I had very much dreaded. The schooners are just like corks, and in a rough sea their unpleasantness can be imagined; and rough it proved to be, rough beyond anything we had expected. We said our farewells to those on board at five in the morning of a dull, drizzling day, with a stiff wind blowing, which soon developed into a gale, and from that hour until after five at night, twelve long, agonizing hours, we were tossed and pitched and rolled around in the schooner until I almost hoped we would be washed overboard, and for only the second time in my life I was sea-sick, absolutely and unashamed. Even a very rough crossing of the English Channel, where the waves washed right over the boat, had not been able to accomplish that. I was so disgusted with everything. Walter, being a splendid sailor, ate a good dinner and did not mind, and then, after all that agony, we had to return to the ship and remain three days for the gale to subside. We had been so glad to leave the ship, and how we disliked that return! Our cabins had been dismantled and nothing was ready for us. Travelling on the ship with us was the son of one of the Company's directors and his friend—two pleasant young fellows, who had been so interested in the novelty of the trip and of our life at Chesterfield.

On the third day a second attempt was made to undertake the schooner trip, which proved successful. The day, though dull at first, was calm, and we had a delightful trip. I ate my share of the wild goose dinner. Of course, there could not be a cabin on board for me, so I slept on

a bale of hay on deck, with a sack of oats for a pillow. A cow was being taken to one of the bay posts and she stood beside me during the trip, but Cinders and I slept and did not mind her, her munching and her mooing sent us to sleep.

At long last we arrived at Moose Factory, a lovely, lovely place, where we found the buildings of the Company, over a hundred years old, standing among wonderful trees, beautiful flowers, and actually a vegetable garden with the first fresh vegetables we had seen in over two years. Of course, the Company with whom we stayed our three days there could not realize what that meant, and so went on having canned ones for meals. How I longed for a bit of the fresh ones! We were given beds which apparently had been occupied by several families before us, but the beds were iron, and so were not inflicted with the usual night visitors.

We spent one afternoon at Moose Factory with Mr. and Mrs. Griffin, Anglican missionaries, who had been there almost twenty years. They had an Indian School and were doing good work. I believe they were leaving the following year, and, also, we were joined by another clergyman, Mr. Walton, and his wife. He had been in the James' Bay district for thirty years, a man of wonderful energy and vitality and not far past fifty. It seemed such a shame for him to be leaving his post and his Indians after so long a life with them without there being someone to take his place. Another instance of our young men failing to respond.

It was our misfortune to miss the aeroplane which goes into Moose Factory twice a year, and so we made the trip to the railway by canoe, taking eight days instead of three hours, which was the time taken by the aeroplane. We

travelled the first few miles up the Moose, crossed the mouth of the Matogami and into the Abittibbi, quite the worst river we had ever navigated, very shallow and very swift. We had to pole the greater part of the way, and the portages were the worst I ever encountered, eight in all, from a few hundred yards up to nine miles, and nearly all of them straight up and straight down again, except the nine-mile one, which was along the very shore. Every inch of the way we fought through young willows, an agonizing memory, they were so close together and so strong that even Cindy could not walk and had to be carried. We slipped and slid and floundered and fought until at the end of five miles I had to stop, it was dreadful. I was scratched and torn and quite breathless, absolutely starved, and tired beyond words. We camped then and finished the next day. Now Cinders had very much disliked the Esquimos; whenever he heard their voices or their steps he rushed at them or the windows and barked, but he did not look a second time at the Indians, and would even go to them if they called him. This puzzled me, except that the Esquimos were terrified of him and ran whenever they saw him, which also I could not understand, since they never fear their own wild dogs.

We camped at nights with the missionary and his family and had a very jolly time; set rabbit snares, and so had some fresh food besides the berries we found. On the seventh night we came to a big camp of the Hollinger people, where they were putting in a power plant. They had fifteen hundred men working for them, with a large staff and engineers. The welcome we received from the latter can never be forgotten. We had expected to go on to Cochrane in a freight train, and, accordingly, were sitting on our bags in a coal car, waiting anxiously for

the train to go, when one of the men came to tell us that it would remain there all night and we were to spend the night with them. What a sight we must have been, woebegone and dishevelled, sitting there in that black, dirty car, and what a change in a few minutes! First, the comfortable quarters of the staff, shower baths, etc., and then such a meal! Never shall I forget it. We did not know which dish to take first and just sat looking, everything fresh, tomatoes, radishes, lettuce, cucumbers, and potatoes, and eggs, real eggs, no more fishy ones! It was a delicious meal, and when we returned to the staff's quarters we had chocolates, fresh that week from one of Toronto's well-known firms, and the radio, but it is the memory of the welcome we received which will remain with us longest. We were strangers, unshaven and unshorn, ragged and unkempt, and they took us in and gave us of their best, and the wife of the chief engineer had us to lunch the next day. Another case of "Ships that pass in the night," but perhaps some day we may be in the position to do for some of them what they did for us that night.

The next afternoon we left in a box car, all standing, except myself perched on a roll of bedding, nearly smothered, and packed as full as it would hold of men leaving the works for Cochrane, where we arrived the same night. We had such a walk from the depot through that little city to the hotel. It was Saturday night, the streets were crowded, and I was such a sight in breeches and high boots, with Cinders in an old coat. Walter was in a uniform sadly in need of cleaning. However, it was not long before a hot bath and a change of clothes made us feel like different people, and what a sleep we had that first night in a real, comfortable, and clean bed! Then how amazed I was next day to find nearly every woman,

child, and girl I met with short hair! I thought with regret of the years I had travelled by dog train and canoe with always my hair such a trial and such a sight, and of what a wonder that through it all Walter still declared he thought the same of me, for, after all, appearance goes most of the way in life towards cementing or severing friendships. Having come through the worst of my trips and so far the last of them, I decided to retain my heavy but straight and unattractive locks until my next journey into the North, or until I can afford to have what they call the "permanent wave," or am very sure that short hair will suit me.

While at Cochrane we met "George," who had acted as guide for Hubbard and his party on their fatal trip to Labrador. Mr. Hubbard of the ill-fated Wallace and Hubbard expedition into the interior of Labrador perished from starvation in October, 1903. George was an interesting native, and performed miracles on that occasion in getting help to save the other members of the party from starvation. He and his wife were returning to their Northern home after an almost yearly trip to New York. This trip, I believe, is provided by the surviving members of the party in grateful recognition of his faithfulness to them.

From Cochrane we wired "Dad" and the "royal family" and Ottawa for orders, but, alas! a sadly disappointed couple we were when word came back that we were to proceed to Regina—going back to the bare, windy prairie—the land of short summers and long winters, and we so longing for a change! But orders are orders. Walter was given a month's leave and we went on to Toronto and Niagara Falls.

On our arrival at Toronto we took Cinders from the

train in his travelling bag by motor to my cousins' apartment. He had never seen either them or the apartment before. I, having no clothes, went to town to get something to wear, never dreaming they would take him out, but they did, and, of course, off like a shot he went to find me. They followed him to Bloor Street and over the bridge into Rosedale, and then lost sight of him. I came home at noon completely fagged out, after my first morning in the city. After the hard trip by canoe to be confronted by such crowds and traffic and noise was quite too much for me. Walter and I were afraid even to cross the roads, and ran like frightened rabbits whenever we saw an opening. As for trying to buy in such crowds, it was beyond me, so home I went, tired and weary, only to be told that Cinders had gone. I was at the end of my tether, long and bitterly I wept, then I telephoned every society and police station and started out to find him. I walked miles in Rosedale, asking every child, delivery man, postman, and policeman I met, all to no avail, and crying all the time. It was a Saturday and the last day of the Exhibition. What chance had a poor little dog to escape such traffic! When I saw the thousands of motors along Bloor Street I wept afresh, and finally went home, a wreck.

After I had been home a few minutes I was going to start out again, I could not rest. I went down to the door, and there my Cinders sat on the block at the curb looking at the door, and with a friend he had brought back with him. My cries of joy aroused the entire block! I grabbed him, dirt and all, and he was well named then. He had started out white as snow, and, lo! in five and a half hours he was actually black as coal. Where he had been and what he had seen he never told me; I am sure he

had had the time of his life, but, unlike some, he knew enough to go home and where that home was, even if he only had seen it for a fleeting moment once in his life before. I consider this a wonderful display of brains in one so small.

Both at Toronto and at Niagara Falls we were received with such a welcome of kindness and hospitality from our old friends. It is one of the pleasantest recollections of life. Our furniture was all stored, what was left of it, at these points. It had to be gathered together, packed and shipped, when all the time we were longing to stay, and the officer who had been North with us, being unmarried, was anxious to go West, but such is life! Our visit was all too short among our loving friends, so many of them my girlhood playmates, my beloved Marion, and Lena, whom I was never to meet again, a loss which I will regret all my life, having been friends since we were five years old and never a disagreement, and Dick, my dear old Dick, whom I had idolized as a child.

And now, too, I was to meet a very old acquaintance. He had come North one summer with the late Mr. Ogilvie, Government geologist, spending several months at The Pas, and we had had an interesting time studying the moon and stars through the telescope. We never saw or heard of him again until our last year at Chesterfield, when he wrote telling us that each time he had been West he had endeavoured to find us, but had failed, so had obtained our address from headquarters and wanted us to be sure to let him know when we arrived anywhere near his several addresses. Walter answered him from Regina telling him I was in Toronto. Immediately the wires were hot with telegrams and long distance calls to arrange a rendezvous, and then flowers began to arrive. No one

can appreciate what they meant to me, just out of the barren lands. They were a glimpse of heaven, and then finally a meeting was arranged which was very exciting, both wondering what the other would find after the long interval. Almost his first words to me were, "Do you know that you people have haunted me for fifteen years? I have never ceased to think of you and of your life out there, until finally I had to see you again to find out what it was." "And now that we have met, what about it?" I replied. His answer must be left to the imagination of the reader, but the flowers continued to arrive until the day I left for the West. It was a happy memory, but only a return journey of one of the "ships which have passed in the night," I am afraid.

We had spent some time being repaired by the dentist, and we had both celebrated our coming out of the North by having a tooth out at Cochrane. However, it was over at last, and once more we started West, wondering what lay ahead of us this time.

CHAPTER XVII

DEPOT

Oh, the hills look green that are far away,
And we struggle to reach them all the day;
And we say, "Oh, would that we could be there,
Where the beautiful emerald hills appear!"
Ah! would in the near we could calmly rest,
But the far off always appears the best;
And this proverb rings in my ears all day;
Oh, the hills look green that are far away!

And so, after many wanderings, many vicissitudes, and many adventures, we came at last, in November, 1924, to the charmed circle of depot headquarters of the force, where all the past and present famous body of men, who have made the force what it is, have received their training. Hours are regular, discipline is strict, every move is guided by the trumpet from reveille in the morning to lights out at night, forty calls in all. Some officers are popular and others are disliked, and it will always be the same where so many men are stationed together. We were gathered into the circle and soon absorbed by them, and seemed to lose all individuality and were only one of the many.

For Walter the life was, as usual, much more difficult than for me. Always before he had been in charge of his post, had had patrols to arrange and make and was responsible for everything, while at the depot his position was quite different, for here is where all the recruits are trained, and now his trips were made by rail and motor instead of by canoe and dog train.

I was once more to experience the comforts of modern conveniences, but when I realized the water I had to put

up with I was thoroughly dismayed, as the water, while wholesome enough to drink, is so hard that at first I could hardly wash with it or bathe in it. I hope never again to experience such misery as my first bath caused me there. It was like getting into sour milk, and the irritation afterwards was exactly as though I had fallen into a bed of nettles. At last I tried oatmeal in the water, which was most successful and removed all irritation. This has since been all changed owing to the installation of water softeners.

It was most interesting renewing old friendships among members of the force and meeting others whom we had heard of for many years but had never happened to be in the same place with before. Gossip was ever rife about contemplated moves, all hoping for something good for themselves, and for the first time I met the wives of the force. An occasional one or two I had met at various times, but only casually, while now I met them *en bloc,* as it were, and their lives were a revelation to me. Gradually and very slowly it began to dawn upon me what I had missed in life and also, perhaps, what they had missed, but more particularly I think I was impressed by the indifference and the ignorance of most of them to the lives that a few of us had been living. They had all married into the force to assured positions, not one of them had ever known the bitter heartaches of being forgotten or of being overlooked; and with the single exception of the wife of one officer, who had been North for four years with her husband, they had lived always among their friends and the comforts of civilization. They had never known the nerve-breaking anxiety which I had passed through for years when Walter left on each trip, never knowing what the result would be. No wonder I had suffered for years

from almost nightly nightmares, from which I always wakened crying for help to overcome some fancied harm to Walter, and which I only lost now that he was in safety.

The Canadian Club and the Kiwanis Club inveigled me into addressing them. All the members were so exceedingly kind to me that even that is forgiven, though not forgotten, but they had not realized what a really uncivilized person I was.

We had been so looking forward to the barrack square as a perfectly safe place for Cinders, but, alas! there were two huskies there before us, and they proved almost the end of Cinders and of me. Of course, they took him to be a fox, and had it not been for the timely arrival of one of the boys his little life would have been over. As it was, he had some ribs broken and a few bad bites. Our old friend, the veterinary surgeon, carefully bandaged and bound him up, and in a few weeks he was again ready for action, and afterwards loved every day of his life at depot, where he could come and go as he liked without fear of either huskies or traffic, for the huskies were removed by death, and left a clear field for Cindy.

How much I loved the daily round of barrack life, the many trumpet calls for varied duties, the men at daily rides and drills, their jolly monthly dances in "C" block, and our own service by our own chaplain in our own little church, one of the original buildings, built when first Regina was depot, the men looking so smart and clean in scarlet serges and so attentive, with arms folded and eyes front. I often thought, as I sat there, that I alone of all those on the "left" knew of the boiling cauldrons held under those quietly folded arms.*

* This paragraph will be understood and very greatly appreciated by every member of the force, past, present, and to

ESQUIMOS IN KYACKS.

facing page 208.

Our quarters were comfortable, rooms small, but garden large, and the only garden which we were to have there I had to plant and look after as Walter was sent flying off for five months' temporary duty. And before it was time for the next garden, at the end of a few short months of depot life, after twenty years, almost all of which we had spent "inside," as the North is always called, we were transferred again. This time it was to be a larger city, where we would be more than ever confined; no riding, no change of climate, which we were so longing for, no chance of a garden of our own; in fact, none of the things for which we had been hoping.

After my heartaches were over, and as long as I had not remembered the climate, I had enjoyed every month in Regina, and left with very real regret, which I should have considered an impossibility when first I had arrived. I brought away with me the memories of many, many hours spent in many homes where I had been made so welcome. How either Cinders or I would survive in the heart of a city, never having lived near people at any time, I could not imagine. I felt it would be a most unphappy time, with no change of climate to which to look forward.

Miss E. E. Lawson of England visited us for a week or so. We were so delighted to welcome her, to be able in however small a way to show her our regard and gratitude for her great interest in the force. This interest has taken a very tangible form, for many years now she has

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be, as the church attendance is compulsory and held early on Sunday morning. The officers with their wives sit on the left side of the church, the men on the right. I do not care to speak any more plainly for our chaplain's sake, as he, of course, did not know how the men disliked and rebelled against compulsory church attendance.

been sending to our Northern posts English illustrated papers and books, which are appreciated by every member of the detachments.

And now from far distant Chesterfield came the first mail since our departure, and seven months after it had occurred came word of the awful tragedy of Mrs. Clay's death. Sergeant Clay was absent on patrol and heard no hint of it until weeks after, when he returned. Mrs. Clay was walking alone one evening close to the blubber shed when she was set upon by the half-starved huskies. The first taste of blood was enough, she was soon down under the pack, and, when rescued by two of our boys, was so torn and lacerated that amputation of one leg was found necessary; a heroic measure to be taken by laymen, but her only hope. The shock and loss of blood was too much for her. On the second day she passed quietly away in a strange and barren land, among men whom she had met for the first time a few short weeks before, with no white woman to ease her going and to do the many little things necessary at such a time. My poor Maria was the only woman present, and how almost sublime her efforts must have been, every action of which went against all her native teachings, but what a comfort it must have been to poor Mrs. Clay to have her.

We were upset for months, the shock of her death was a great blow. I have never seen Walter so overcome by anything. I was the last white woman to see her alive, our talk had been intimate, she had told me of her misgivings, I had tried to encourage her, and, as I have already stated, she had haunted me all winter. No one else could visualize as I could what she had gone through in that lonely place. One of my last acts at Chesterfield had been to label the chloroform bottle and show her where it was

kept. How little we realized to what use it was to be put! Maria wrote to tell me of the event, and deserves every credit for her efforts on Mrs. Clay's behalf, and Mrs. Clay is a martyr. Her death is the most awful tragedy which has ever occurred in the force, no doctor within a thousand miles, while in the Western Arctic a doctor is always accessible. It had been found desirable to have a white woman stationed at that post, and I have been disappointed at the fact that the powers that be have not in some way recognized the sacrifice made by Mrs. Clay, who has given her life for the force just as truly as our men in France gave their lives for their country.

CHAPTER XVIII

WINNIPEG

WINNIPEG, third largest city in Canada! Had anyone told us during our first years in the force that the mounted police would ever be stationed here we would have called them false prophets, but here we are, and gradually getting accustomed to city life. The life is entirely and absolutely different to our former mode of life, and to me not to be compared with it.

Our life for so long a time spent in lonely outposts of civilization has bred such a habit of silence in us that we yet sit for hours and never speak, content to be in the same room reading. Indeed, now that we are in civilization again I find myself "queer." The language of women is strange to me. Also, we were during the years of exile at what I used to call the "absorbing age," when our habits were being formed and we were unconsciously taking in everything around us, so that now, when we are with our own kind again, it is perhaps too late to become what they call "modern" as quickly as perhaps we or our friends might wish.

The first few months at Winnipeg were indeed misery, pure, unadulterated misery! We could only get accommodation in an apartment. Everyone told me I was most fortunate to have found such a good one, but they could not understand my feelings. The noise and the constant meeting with strangers were so unpleasant, each time I looked out there was someone. I avoided for a month my nearest neighbour, but finally she caught me and she and

her family have been so kind ever since. I believe now we were just sent there that we might know them. The officer in temporary charge of our headquarters, an inspector like the rest of us, only junior in service, was soon moved, to be followed by our old friends, Major and Mrs. Allard from Dawson. The Major has at all times endeavoured to do his best for those of his command. Long may he continue!

And we are again living in a house, but an old one, and all the dust of countless ages has accumulated here. How I long for the cleanliness of the Arctic, where never a speck of dust was seen and everything was always clean! Even Cinders never had to have a bath there, he was white as the snow at all times, while here he is just what his name implies. We have a front lawn the size of a pocket handkerchief, lady's size, a back garden of the same pattern, only gentleman's size, with the one redeeming feature of a gorgeous lilac hedge, which is a joy to the neighbourhood and the envy of all small boys, who rob it day and night.

While, therefore, we are supposedly living in civilization, we are really not deriving much advantage from it, and the shopping is so very uncomfortable. I never could bear to be near people or touched by them, and here each time I go to town I am pushed and jostled and rubbed until I can scarcely stand it, and come home longing for the open spaces, where we do not have to have so many odds and ends (as we think we need here), and so never think of them. I am gradually learning the different meanings of words, "compacts" and "completes," etc., and have at last been induced to wear a boutonnière, though the sight of women "making up" in trams, shops, and even at a chance mirror on the street, is to me an appalling

sight. "Make-up" artistically applied in private, I say nothing against, as I believe every person should make the best of themselves. Where is our list of "Don'ts" now? But everyone seems alike, and again our individuality is all, if we ever had any, swallowed up. And such gas-tainted air! I cannot get used to it. Every time I go out I am choked.

A few months after our arrival my beloved Cinders was stolen and kept three days and two nights. Walter was away. What an agony I went through! The city police were most kind in posting his loss and giving me information. He finally returned himself. He will neither eat nor drink from strangers, so they must have let him go on finding that out. He continues his daily peregrinations through all the traffic, but never tells me where he wanders.

It has been a great pleasure to meet old friends. This is the first time we have been stationed on a main thoroughfare, where it seems that sooner or later everyone passes. Dozens of old friends have called upon us since our arrival, some whom we had not seen for ten or fifteen years, so that after all we have seen again some of "the ships that had passed in the night." What a wonderful thing memory is! What would life be without it? As Cicero says, "It is the treasury and guardian of all things."

One day in answering the telephone a lady's voice asked me if I was the Mrs. Munday who had been at Chesterfield. When I replied in the affirmative she said, "Well, I used to be one of your neighbours." "One of my neighbours!" I replied, being so surprised I could not think, and she answered, "Yes, your nearest, I believe, being nearly a thousand miles south of you." And so now we are both living in Winnipeg. Her husband had also been

in the force at that time, and when Sergeant Douglas, from whom we took over at Chesterfield, passed their detachment on his way out he told them that there wasn't any blue at Chesterfield, and that I was in quite a way because the clothes were so exactly the colour of ashes. By the next mail, which reached us in May, only eight months after, Mrs. Campbell kindly and thoughtfully sent me blue, among other articles, and so the clothes were rescued.

It is a great pleasure and satisfaction to the old members of the force that they are to police the provinces again. A pleasure because they are coming into their own, a satisfaction to know that their efforts have been appreciated and so rewarded by returning to them their old territory, which would not be the safe law-abiding country it is to-day had the force not been in charge in the early days. It seems to me that more recognition could be given to older members of the force, who have spent the best years of their lives working for their country, and perhaps it may come yet. I am still the optimist through all our hard knocks.

Walter's motto is that of the old German philosopher, Schopenhauer, "Never expect anything, then you are never disappointed. Keep your mind and body strong and clean, which gives you strength to cope with anything, take the good which the gods provide, but do not look for any favours from them."

And after all perhaps he is right, but for myself I cannot quite follow it, much as I would like to. I awaken each day with expectancy, wondering what is in store for us, and always hoping for something good. At this very present time every hope in me is for a good sub-district for Walter, where once again he will have to do the work which he loves, and where he can prove his worth, and

where once more we can be in the back stretches of life with time to enjoy a few congenial friends, reading and gardening and fresh air, and avoid living as we are living here, at what seems to be such high pressure, and yet with nothing of any account ever accomplished.

Walter has one inspection into the North to make, and I am once more going to accompany him. It will perhaps be my last Northern trip through the lakes and rivers and the forests primeval which I have so loved, the memories of our Cumberland days will be vivid and full of pleasure, and once again I shall "Hear the trailing garments of the night" and feel "Her presence stoop o'er me from above," and so shall "Drink repose."

> And the night shall be filled with music,
> And the cares that infest the day
> Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
> And as silently steal away.

On the return trip we shall touch again the Hudson Bay Line, visit with old trapper and trader friends, and pass through the new and now widely famous town of The Pas. How different it will be! Where the forest has disappeared and the hard asphalt has taken its place, where only the silent moccasin-shod feet of the Indians once walked among its trees.

I am sorry I do not know the author of the last little poem. I have had it beside me for years:

> She follows me about my house of Life
> (This happy little ghost of my dead youth),
> She has no part in Time's relentless strife;
> She keeps her old simplicity and truth,
> And laughs at grim mortality:
> This deathless child that stays with me,
> This happy little ghost of my dead youth.

My house of Life is weather stained with years,
(Oh, child in me, I wonder why you stay?)
Its windows are bedimmed with rain of tears,
Its walls have lost their rose, its thatch is grey;
One after one its guests depart,
So dull a host is my old heart
(Oh, child in me, I wonder why you stay?)

Oh, child in me, leave not my house of clay
Until we pass together through its door
When lights are out, and Life has gone away,
And we depart to come again no more.
We comrades, who have travelled far,
Will hail the twilight and the star,
And gladly pass together through the door.

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